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Krishnamurti, Jiddu, 1895—

TALKS BY  
KRISHNAMURTI

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for those who heard the Talks*

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## I

## TALK IN BOMBAY

Freedom is of the highest importance, but we place it within the borders of our own conceit. We have preconceived ideas of what freedom is, or what it *should* be; we have beliefs, ideals, conclusions about freedom. But freedom is something that cannot be preconceived. It has to be understood. Freedom does not come through mere intellection, through a logical reasoning from conclusion to conclusion. It comes darkly, unexpectedly; it is born of its own inward state. To realize freedom requires an alert mind, a mind that is deep with energy, a mind that is capable of immediate perception without the process of gradation, without the idea of an end to be slowly achieved. So, if I may, I would like to think aloud with you about freedom this evening.

Before we go more deeply into this question, I think it is necessary that we be aware of how the mind has become a slave. With most of us, the mind is a slave to tradition, to custom, to habit, to the daily job which we have to do and to which we are addicted. I think very few of us realize how slavish our minds are; and without perceiving what makes the mind slavish, without being aware of the nature of its slavery, we cannot understand what freedom is. Unless one is aware of how the mind is captured and held, which is to comprehend the totality of its slavishness, I do not think the mind can ever be free. One has to understand what *is* before one can perceive that which is other than what *is*.

So let us observe our own minds; let us look at the totality of the mind, the unconscious as well as the conscious. The conscious mind is that which is occupied with the everyday events of life; it is the mind that learns, that adjusts, that acquires a technique, whether scientific, medical, or bureaucratic. It is the conscious mind of the

businessman that becomes a slave to the job which he has to do. Most of us are occupied from nine o'clock until five, almost every day of our existence, earning a livelihood; and when the mind spends so much of its life in acquiring and practising a technique, whether it be that of a mechanic, a surgeon, an engineer, a businessman, or what you will, naturally it becomes a slave to that technique. I think this is fairly obvious. As the housewife is a slave to the house, to her husband, to cooking for her children, so is the man a slave to his job; and both are slaves to tradition, to custom, to knowledge, conclusions, beliefs, to the conditioned ways of their own thinking. And we accept this slavery as inevitable. We never inquire to find out whether we can function without being slaves. Having accepted the inevitability of earning a livelihood, we have also accepted as inevitable the mind's slavishness, its fears, and thus we tread the mill of everyday existence.

We have to live in this world—that is the only inevitable thing in life. And the question is, surely, whether we cannot live in this world with freedom. Can we not live in this world without being slaves, without the everlasting burden of fear and frustration, without all the agony of sorrow? The limitations of the mind, the limitations of our own thinking, make us slaves. And if we observe, we see that the margin of freedom for the individual is getting narrower all the time. The politicians, the organized religions, the books we read, the knowledge and techniques we acquire, the traditions we are born into, the demands of our own ambitions and desires—these are all narrowing down the margin of freedom. I do not know to what extent and to what depth you are aware of this.

We are not talking of slavery as an abstraction, something which you hear about this evening and then return to your old routine. On the contrary, I think it is very important to understand this problem for oneself, because it is

only in freedom that there is love; it is only in freedom that there is creation; it is only in freedom that truth can be found. Do what it will, a slavish mind can never find truth; a slavish mind can never know the beauty and the fullness of life. So I think it is very important to perceive how the mind, by its own processes, by its addiction to tradition, to custom, to knowledge and belief, becomes a slave.

I wonder if you as an individual are aware of this problem? Are you concerned merely to exist somehow in this ugly, brutal world, muttering on the side about God and freedom, and cultivating some futile virtue which makes you very respectable in the eyes of society? Or are you concerned with human dignity? There can be no human dignity without freedom; and freedom is not easily come by. To be free, one must understand oneself; one must be aware of the movements of thought and feeling, the ways of one's own mind.

As we are talking together, I wonder if you are aware of yourself? Are you aware, not theoretically, but *actually*, to what depth you are a slave? Or are you merely giving explanations—saying to yourself that some degree of slavery is inevitable, that you must earn a livelihood, that you have duties, responsibilities—and remaining satisfied with those explanations?

We are not concerned with what you should or should not do; that is not the problem. We are concerned with understanding the mind; and in understanding there is no condemnation, no demand for a pattern of action. You are merely observing; and observation is denied when you concern yourself with a pattern of action, or merely explain the inevitability of a slavish life. What matters is to observe your own mind without judgment—just to look at it, to watch it, to be conscious of the fact that your mind is a slave, and no more; because that very perception releases energy, and it is this energy that is going to destroy the slavishness of the mind. But if you

merely ask, "How am I to be free from my slavery to routine, from my fear and boredom in everyday existence?", you will never release this energy. We are concerned only with perceiving what *is*; and it is the perception of what *is* that releases the creative fire. You cannot perceive if you do not ask the right question—and a right question has no answer, because it needs no answer. It is wrong questions that invariably have answers. The urgency behind the right question, the very instance of it, brings about perception. The perceiving mind is living, moving, full of energy, and only such a mind can understand what truth is.

But most of us, when we are face to face with a problem of this kind, invariably seek an answer, a solution, the 'what to do'; and the solution, the 'what to do' is so easy, leading to further misfortune, further misery. That is the way of politicians. That is the way of the organized religions, which offer an answer, an explanation; and having found it, the so-called religious mind is thereby satisfied.

But we are not politicians, nor are we slavish to organized religions. We are now examining the ways of our own minds, and for that there must be no fear. To find out about oneself, what one thinks, what one is, the extraordinary depths and movements of the mind—just to be aware of all that, requires a certain freedom. And to inquire into oneself also requires an astonishing energy, because one has to travel a distance which is immeasurable. Most of us are fascinated by the idea of going to the moon, or to Venus; but those distances are much shorter than the distance within ourselves.

So, to go into ourselves deeply, fully, a sense of freedom is necessary—not at the end, but at the very beginning. Do not ask how to arrive at that freedom. No system of meditation, no book, no drug, no psychological trick you can play on yourself, will give you freedom. Freedom is born of the

perception that freedom is essential. The moment you perceive that freedom is essential, you are in a state of revolt—revolt against this ugly world, against all orthodoxy, against tradition, against leadership, both political and religious. Revolt within the framework of the mind, soon withers away; but there is a lasting revolt which comes into being when you perceive for yourself that freedom is essential.

Unfortunately, most of us are not aware of ourselves. We have never given thought to the ways of our minds as we have given thought to our techniques, to our jobs. We have never really looked at ourselves; we have never wandered into the depths of ourselves without calculation, without premeditation, without seeking something out of those depths. We have never taken the journey into ourselves without a purpose. The moment one has a motive, a purpose, one is a slave to it; one cannot wander freely within oneself, because one is always thinking in terms of change, of self-improvement. One is tied to the post of self-improvement, which is a projection of one's own narrow, petty mind.

Do please consider what I am saying, not merely verbally, but observe your own mind, the actuality of your own inner state. As long as you are a slave, your muttering about God, about truth, about all the things that you have learned from sacred books, has no meaning; it only perpetuates your slavery. But if your mind begins to perceive the necessity of freedom, it will create its own energy, which will then operate without your calculated efforts to be free of slavery.

So, we are concerned with the freedom of the individual. But to discover the individual is very difficult, because at present we are not individuals. We are the product of our environment, of our culture; we are the product of the food we eat, of our climate, our customs, our traditions. Surely, that is not individuality. I think individuality comes into being only when one is fully aware

of this encroaching movement of environment and tradition that makes the mind a slave. As long as I accept the dictates of tradition, of a particular culture, as long as I carry the weight of my memories, my experiences—which after all are the result of my conditioning—I am not an individual, but merely a product.

When you call yourself a Hindu, a Moslem, a Parsi, a Buddhist, a Communist, a Catholic, or what you will, are you not the product of your culture, your environment? And even when you react against that environment, your reaction is still within the field of conditioning. Instead of being a Hindu, you become a Christian, a Communist, or something else. There is individuality only when the mind perceives the narrow margin of its freedom and battles ceaselessly against the encroachment of the politician and of the organized beliefs which are called religion; against the encroachment of knowledge, of technique, and of one's own accumulated experiences, which are the result of one's conditioning, one's background.

This perception, this constant awareness of what *is*, has its own will—if I can use that word 'will' without confusing it with the will to which you are so accustomed, and which is the product of desire. The will of discipline, of effort, is the product of desire, surely, and it creates the conflict between what *is* and what *should be*, between what you want and what you do not want. It is a reaction, a resistance, and such will is bound to create other reactions and other forms of resistance. Therefore there is never freedom through will—the will of which you know. I am talking of a perceptive state of mind which has its own action. That is, perception itself is action. I wonder if I am making myself clear!

You see, sirs, I realize, as you must realize too, that the mind is a slave to habit, to custom, to tradition, and to all the memories with which it is burdened. Realizing this, the mind

also realizes that it must be free; because it is only in freedom that one can inquire, that one can discover. So, to perceive the necessity of being free is an absolute necessity.

Now, how is the slavish mind to be free? Please follow this. How is the slavish mind to be free? We are asking this question because we see that our lives are nothing but slavery. Going to the office day after day in utter boredom, being a slave to tradition, to custom, to fear, to one's wife or husband, to one's boss—that is one's life, and one sees the appalling pettiness, the nauseating indignity of it all. So we are asking this question: "How am I to be free?" And is that a right question? If it is, it will have no answer, because the question itself will open the door. But if it is a wrong question, you will find—at least you will think you have found—ways and means of 'solving' the problem. But do what it will, the slavish mind can never free itself through any means, through any system or method. Whereas, if you perceive totally, completely, absolutely, that the mind must be free, then that very perception brings an action which will set the mind free.

I think it is very important to understand this; and understanding is instantaneous. You do not understand tomorrow. There is no arrival at understanding after thinking it over. You either understand now, or you don't understand at all. Understanding takes place when the mind is not cluttered up with motives, with fears, with the demand for an answer. I wonder if you have noticed that there are no answers to life's questions? You can ask questions like "What is the goal of life?", or "What happens after death?", or "How am I to meditate?", or "My job is boring, what shall I do?" You can ask, but *how* you ask is what matters. If you ask with a purpose, that is, with the motive of finding an answer, the answer will invariably be false, because your desire, your petty mind has already projected it. So the state of the mind that questions is

much more important than the question itself. Any question that may be asked by a slavish mind, and the answer it receives, will still be within the limitations of its own slavery. But a mind that realizes the full extent of its slavery, will have a totally different approach; and it is this totally different approach that we are concerned with. You can ask the right question only when you see instantly the absolute necessity of freedom.

Our minds are the result of a thousand yesterdays; being conditioned by the culture in which they live, and by the memory of past experiences, they devote themselves to the acquisition of knowledge and technique. To such minds, truth or God can obviously have no meaning. Their talk of truth is like the muttering of a slave about freedom. But you see, most of us prefer to be slaves; it is less troublesome, more respectable, more comfortable. In slavery there is little danger, our lives are more or less secure, and that is what we want—security, certainty, a way of life in which there will be no serious disturbance.

But life comes knocking at our door, and it brings sorrow. We feel frustrated, we are in misery, and there is after all no certainty, because everything is constantly changing. All relationships break up, and we want a permanent relationship. So life is one thing, and what we want is another. There is a battle between what we want and what life is; and what we want is made narrow by the pettiness of our minds, of our everyday existence. Our battles, our contradictions, our struggles with life are at a very superficial level; our petty little questionings based on fears and anxieties, inevitably finds an answer as shallow as itself.

Sirs, life is something extraordinary, if you observe it. Life is not merely this stupid little quarrelling among ourselves, this dividing up of mankind into nations, races, classes; it is not just the contradiction and misery of our daily existence.

Life is wide, limitless, it is that state of love which is beauty; life is sorrow and this tremendous sense of joy. But our joys and sorrows are so small, and from that shallowness of mind we ask questions and find answers.

So the problem is, surely, to free the mind totally, so that it is in a state of awareness which has no border, no frontier. And how is the mind to discover that state? How is it to come to that freedom?

I hope you are seriously putting this question to yourselves, because I am not putting it to you. I am not trying to influence you, I am merely pointing out the importance of asking oneself this question. The verbal asking of the question by another has no meaning if you don't put it to yourself with instance, with urgency. The margin of freedom is growing narrower every day, as you must know if you are at all observant. The politicians, the leaders, the priests, the newspapers and books you read, the knowledge you acquire, the beliefs you cling to—all this is making the margin of freedom more and more narrow. If you are aware of this process going on, if you actually perceive the narrowness of the spirit, the increasing slavery of the mind, then you will find that out of perception comes energy; and it is this energy born of perception that is going to shatter the petty mind, the respectable mind, the mind that goes to the temple, the mind that is afraid. So perception is the way of truth.

You know, to perceive something is an astonishing experience. I do not know if you have ever really perceived anything—if you have ever perceived a flower, or a face, or the sky, or the sea. Of course, you see these things as you pass by in a bus or a car; but I wonder whether you have ever taken the trouble actually to look at a flower? And when you *do* look at a flower, what happens? You immediately name the flower, you are concerned with what species it belongs to, or you say, "What lovely colours it has. I would like to grow it in

my garden; I would like to give it to my wife, or put it in my button-hole", and so on. In other words, the moment you look at a flower, your mind begins chattering about it; therefore you never perceive the flower. You perceive something only when your mind is silent, when there is no chattering of any kind. If you can look at the evening star over the sea without a movement of the mind, then you really perceive the extraordinary beauty of it; and when you perceive beauty, do you not also experience the state of love? Surely, beauty and love are the same. Without love there is no beauty, and without beauty there is no love. Beauty is in form, beauty is in speech, beauty is in conduct. If there is no love, conduct is empty; it is merely the product of society, of a particular culture, and what is produced is mechanical, lifeless. But when the mind perceives without the slightest flutter, then it is capable of looking into the total depth of itself; and such perception is really timeless. You don't have to do something to bring it about; there is no discipline, no practice, no method by which you can learn to perceive.

Sirs, do please listen to what I am saying. Your minds are slaves to patterns, to systems, to methods and techniques. I am talking of something entirely different. Perception is instantaneous, timeless; there is no gradual approach to it. It is on the instant that perception takes place; it is a state of effortless attention. The mind is not making an effort, therefore it does not create a border, a frontier, it does not place a limitation on its own consciousness. Then life is not this terrible process of sorrow, of struggle, of unutterable boredom. Life is then an eternal movement, without beginning and without end. But to be aware of that timeless state, to feel the tremendous depth and ecstasy of it, one must begin by understanding the slavish mind. Without understanding the one, you cannot have the other.

We would like to escape from our slavery, and that is why we talk about religious things; that is why we read the Scriptures; that is why we speculate, argue, discuss—which is all so vain and futile. Whereas, if you are aware that your mind is narrow, limited, slavish, petty—aware of it choicelessly—then you are in a state of perception; and it is this perception that will bring the necessary energy to free the mind from its slavery. Then the mind has no centre from which it acts. The moment you have a centre, there must also be a circumference; and to function from a centre, within a circumference, is slavery. But when the mind, being aware of the centre, also perceives the nature of the centre, that very perception is enough. To perceive the nature of the centre, is the greatest thing you can do; it is the greatest action the mind can take. But that requires your complete attention. You know, when you love something without any motive, without any want, such love brings its own results, it finds its own way, it is its own beauty.

So, what is important is to be aware of how one's mind, in the very process of accumulation, becomes a slave. Do not ask, "How am I to be free from accumulation?", for then you are putting a wrong question. But if you really perceive for yourself that your mind is accumulating, that is enough. To perceive requires complete attention; and when you give your whole mind, your whole heart, your total being to something, there is no problem. It is partial attention, in which there is a withholding, that creates the problems and the miseries in our life.

*December 23, 1959*

## II

### TALK IN BOMBAY

This evening I would like to think aloud about the question of effort, con-

flict, and about that limited field of consciousness whose boundaries are laid down by thought and experience. It is rather a complex problem, and I think one has to give a fair amount of attention to comprehend it. We are caught up in conflicts of many types, in varying degrees, and at various depths. Some conflicts are very shallow, mechanical and easily resolved, but there are others which are much deeper, almost unfathomable. These hidden conflicts invariably produce distorted actions, which in turn create a great deal of misery and sorrow, the ever-increasing problems with which we are all confronted in our daily life.

So, if possible, I would like to talk over this whole question of effort, conflict, and that limited field of consciousness, the boundaries of which have been laid down by thought and experience. You may ask, "When we have so much unemployment, poverty, starvation, degradation, sorrow, fear, and all the other miseries which plague our existence, why discuss the subject of consciousness? What has that to do with our daily living?" I think it has a great deal to do with it. Without understanding the whole process of our own thinking, without being familiar with its ways and movements, I do not quite see how there can be any way out of our difficulties.

In this unfortunate country, you have not only economic, political and linguistic problems, but you also have individual difficulties arising from the problems which the western culture has imposed upon the eastern culture. There are problems of which, perhaps, many of you are unaware—and probably you do not care to be aware of them, because you want to live an easy life, a sluggish, indolent life. We are surrounded by many things, both ugly and beautiful. The filth in the city streets, the poverty and squalor of the village, the beauty of the trees against the sky, and our relationship to all these things—most of us are not sensitive to any of this, because

we want to lead a safe, secure, undisturbed life. But disaster is always just around the corner.

Wherever you are placed, whether you have a great deal of money, or are struggling to make ends meet, these problems exist both within and without, and it seems to me of the utmost importance for every serious-minded person to be aware of them. But it is no good merely being aware of the outward problems, and trying to reform the pattern of our physical existence. To bring about clarity in the world, there must first be inward clarity. You cannot put things about you in order without having order inwardly. Order begins with perception, not with the rearrangement of things outside the skin.

So, what we are going to talk about is intimately connected with our daily problems. Please don't shut yourself off by saying, "That does not concern me". It *does* concern you, terribly. You may not want to be concerned, you may not want to think about it; but it is the job of every human being to be aware of the whole human problem. We cannot concentrate exclusively on a specialized problem, and be occupied only with that. We must be concerned, it seems to me, with the totality of consciousness, and not just with a particular segment of it. You and I must be concerned with the total man, because we are responsible for everything that happens in the world, whether it happens in Russia, in America, here in India, or anywhere else. We are closely inter-related, and whatever happens in one place affects us all. No country can be rich while another is stricken with poverty. This is not a political speech, it is merely to point out the responsibility of each one of us as an individual; and that is why I say it is of the utmost importance to be aware of the problem which I am going to talk about this evening.

But before going into it, I think it is important to understand one central

issue: that the means is the end. There is no end apart from the means. Do please see the importance of this—but not just intellectually, because mere intellectual or verbal comprehension has very little value. Any fool can understand verbally; but to *feel* the truth of this, to feel that the means and the end are one, is quite another matter.

Through a particular means you cannot reach an end or an object different from that means. There is a right means by which to become an engineer, an architect, a scientist, a surgeon, and so on. There is also a means of working for the utopian goal which the Communists and others talk about. We are not concerned for the moment whether the means is right or wrong. But apart from learning a technique, where there is a means to an end, it invariably develops a mechanical attitude towards life, which is really materialistic. The man who puts on a *sannyasi's* robe, who renounces the world and becomes a monk in order to be 'spiritual', is really a materialist, because he is dividing the end from the means.

Please understand what I am talking about, and don't say, "You are talking nonsense, because all the sacred books, from ancient times up to the present, insist that a system or a method is necessary". That is merely the accepted tradition. You don't know, you just accept and repeat what you have been told. You may say that tradition is the only thing you *do* know. If that is so, then you must obviously listen fairly intelligently when something is said which is not in accord with tradition. For the time being, at least, you must listen to find out the truth or the falseness of what is being said.

Please see the truth that to use a means to an end develops a mechanical attitude towards life. Using a means to an end implies efficiency. An efficient mind is necessary in the world of engineering, in the world of mechanics, in the world of science; but an efficient mind in the world of thought, is a tyrant.

Your *gurus*, your *swamis*, your religious books are all tyrannical, because they are always bound to the pursuit of an end through a means. Therefore the means strangles you, it makes you a slave. There is no freedom through a means. If the end is freedom, it is no good going through slavery to reach it. If freedom does not lie in the very first step that you take, there will be no freedom at the end. To say that by going through slavery now you will ultimately be free—that is the good old game of the politicians, of the *swamis* and the *yogis*.

This is a very important point, so let us be very clear about it. What I am going to uncover and talk over with you does not permit a mind that is in any way mechanical. If, being used to a system, you have come here looking for a new system to replace the old, I am afraid you will be disappointed; because I am offering no system, no method, no goal. What we are trying to do together is to uncover, and therefore discover, as we go along. But discovery can take place only when the mind is free, and that is why freedom is so very important. You cannot discover even the common things of life, you cannot see beauty, the lovely shape and colour, the newness of things, if you merely look at them habitually. In the very unfolding of a problem, lies discovery; but the moment you begin to accumulate what is discovered, you cease to discover. Do please understand this. The discovery or understanding of something new is impossible for the accumulative mechanical mind.

Look, sirs. You have often heard the crows calling to each other, have you not? What an awful noise they make settling down for the night in a tree! Have you ever listened to their noise, actually *listened* to it? I doubt that you ever have. You have probably shut it out, saying it is an ugly noise, a nuisance. But if you are really capable of listening, there is no division between that noise and what is said, because

attention implies the clarity of altogetherness, in which there is no exclusion. And that is what we are trying to do now: to uncover, to unfold the altogetherness of thought, of attention.

So, I hope you are listening to what is being said as you would listen for the first time to something new. Fortunately or unfortunately, but probably most unfortunately, some of you have heard me many times. Your listening has become a habit, and so you say "I have heard that before, it is nothing new". Sirs, there is nothing new on the earth, but there can be a newness in the way you listen to what you hear. Then everything is new, everything is living; then every movement of the mind is an uncovering, a discovery. So do please listen to me in that way, because I am going to touch upon something to which you are not accustomed at all. I want to go into the problem of self-contradiction. Why does it exist, and must one everlastingly bear with it? Or is there a possibility of understanding and going beyond it?

Self-contradiction implies the question of effort, does it not? Our whole life is based on it; from school-age till we die, we everlastingly make effort. As a student you were urged to make effort, otherwise you would not pass the beastly examination. You have to make effort to concentrate at the office; you have to make effort to be reconciled to your boss, to your wife or husband, to your neighbours, with all the ugliness of it; you have to make effort to control, discipline yourself; and some of you make tremendous effort to find what you call God. That is your life, sirs, is it not? From morning till night, you are making effort, with never a moment of quietude, never a moment when the mind is at ease, when it is full, rich, joyous. It is always struggling, struggling, struggling.

To me, such a life is vain, useless, it does not mean a thing; so I would like to examine that whole process. Don't

say, "Effort, conflict is inevitable, it is part of human nature", for then you have stopped listening, you have ceased to inquire. Don't accept anything—either what is being said now, or anything else in the world—because life is not a matter of acceptance and denial. Life has to be lived, it has to be felt and understood. When you merely accept or deny, you have barricaded your mind; you have ceased to feel, to live.

Do please apply this to yourself. You are not just listening to a lot of words that have no meaning in your daily life.

You have accepted the inevitability of effort; and when you are asked why you make effort, you say, "If I did not make effort, I would be torn to pieces by society. If I did not discipline myself, I would be all over the place", and so on. But to find out why you really make effort, you must uncover the source of this urge, must you not, sirs? Throughout your life you make ceaseless effort, and you have never asked yourself why; and at the end of it, what are you? A useless human being, crippled, dehydrated, worthless. So, what is the cause of this constant effort you are making?

Now, when you are inquiring into a cause, mere definition, which is a form of conclusion, has no value. You have to feel it out. You know, there is the intellect, and there is pure feeling—the pure feeling of loving something, of having great, generous emotions. The intellect reasons, calculates, weighs, balances. It asks, "Is it worthwhile? Will it give me benefit?" On the other hand, there is pure feeling—the extraordinary feeling for the sky, for your neighbour, for your wife or husband, for your child, for the world, for the beauty of a tree, and so on. When these two come together, there is death. Do you understand? When pure feeling is corrupted by the intellect, there is mediocrity. That is what most of us are doing. Our lives are mediocre because we are always calculating,

asking ourselves whether it is worth while, what profit we will get, not only in the world of money, but also in the so-called spiritual world: "If I do *this*, will I get *that*?"

So the cause of effort has to be discovered. Don't accept or deny what is being said, because I am only helping you to uncover, to look. It is stupid merely to accept or deny, for then one does not look; and we are trying to discover something, to experience it for ourselves.

So, what is the cause of this effort we are always making? Surely, it is self-contradiction. Do you understand? There is contradiction in our thinking, in our living, in our very being; and where there is contradiction, there must be effort—the effort to be or not to be this or that. Contradiction exists in little things, and in big things too. There is contradiction in our various desires; there is the contradiction of what I am and what I think I *should* be, which is exaggerated by the ideal. Wherever there is an ideal, self-contradiction is inevitable. All ideals perpetuate this inward conflict. However noble the ideal may be, a mind that follows the ideal must be in a continuous state of self-contradiction; and a self-contradictory mind is caught in this net of incessant effort.

Please, sirs, see the truth of this, and do not merely accept or reject what I am saying, for then it will have no value. It is of the utmost importance to see that the ideal perpetuates self-contradiction, and that through self-contradiction there can be no action which is not corrupt. As long as there is self-contradiction, all action is corruption. Sirs, 'good' action in the wrong direction is evil, and the 'good' action of a mind which is in contradiction with itself, is bound to produce misery. That is exactly what is happening in this and every other land.

So, self-contradiction is the cause of this ceaseless effort which most of us are making. Self-contradiction exists

because one wants to be something, does it not? I want to be the governor, or the prime minister; I want to be noble, non-greedy; I want to become a saint. Do you follow, sirs? The moment you have an idea of being or becoming something, there must be self-contradiction. Don't say, "Then must I not become something?" That is not the problem. Just see what is implied in becoming something. That is enough.

If you say that you want to become something, in the worldly or the so-called spiritual sense, then you must inevitably accept self-contradiction and effort, with all the crookedness that is born of that effort. And as long as there is contradiction within yourself, you will never produce a world in which human beings can be happy. All your saints, all your leaders have been brought up in this tradition of becoming something, and they are seething with self-contradiction; therefore whatever "good" they may do will only produce evil. You may not like what is being said, but this is a fact.

Self-contradiction does produce action, does it not? And the more determined you are in your self-contradiction, the more energy you pour into action. Do watch this process in yourself. The tension of self-contradiction produces its own action. If you are a clerk and you want to be the manager, or you want to become a famous artist or writer, or a great saint, in that state of self-contradiction you act most vigorously, and your action is praised by society, which is equally in a state of self-contradiction. You are *this*, which you dislike, and you want to become *that*, which you like. So, self-contradiction is the cause of your ceaseless effort. Don't say, "How am I to get out of self-contradiction?" That is a most silly question to ask. Just see how completely you are caught up in self-contradiction. That is enough; because the moment you are fully aware of the contradiction in yourself, with all its implications, that very awareness creates

the energy to be free of contradiction. Awareness of the fact, like awareness of a dangerous thing, creates its own energy, which in turn produces action not based on contradiction.

So, there is contradiction in each one of us, is there not? I hate, and I want to love; I am stupid, and I want to be clever. We are all so familiar with contradiction in ourselves, we live with it day and night. And how is it to be understood—*understood*, not transcended, suppressed, or sublimated? You know, to understand something, you must have love in your heart. To understand the beauty of a tree-trunk, or of a curving branch, or of the sunlight through the leaves, you must look, you must feel, you must love. In the same way, there must be the state of affection, of sympathy, of love, if one is to understand this inner contradiction. And to go deeply into the problem of what creates contradiction, there must be infinite patience. Do you understand, sirs?

I want to know myself, the entirety of myself; I want to know the shallowness, the pettiness of every thought, every feeling; I want to delve deeply into my own consciousness so that I begin to understand its whole process. But to do that, there must be love, there must be patience, there must be a sense of insistency which is not a product of the will, but a spontaneous movement in everyday living. So, with love and patience, and with this sense of insistency, let us try to find out what consciousness is.

Consciousness, surely, is based on contradiction; it is a process of relationship and association. If there is no relationship, there is no consciousness. The relationship of ideas, the association of experiences that one has gathered, of memories that one has consciously or unconsciously stored up, the racial instincts, the traditions that one has inherited, the innumerable influences to which one is subject—all this makes up what we call consciousness. After all,

in considering yourself a Hindu, a Parsi, a Buddhist, or a Christian, you are merely the result of certain influences. We are not talking about good or bad influences. All influence limits the mind; and a mind that is limited, narrowed down by influence, is a very effective tool—which is what the organized religions want.

So consciousness, surely, is that state of contradiction, with its ceaseless effort, which lays down the boundaries of the mind; it is the way of thought which creates a centre and a circumference.

Look, sirs, let us make it very simple. What are you? You are a businessman, a clerk, a professor, an engineer, or what you will. If you are a professor, your mind is limited by the knowledge you have acquired. That is obvious. If you are a businessman, your experience in the world of acquiring money, with its competition, its cheating, and all the rest of it, limits the field of your thinking. If you are a scientist, your field of inquiry is likewise limited by what you know. If you are a so-called religious man, your consciousness is held within the frontiers of the particular environment in which you were brought up, whether it be Hindu, Buddhist, Moslem, Christian, or any other.

So contradiction, with its effort, limits the mind, and that limited consciousness becomes the 'me'—the 'me' who is an engineer, who has lived so many years and constructed so many bridges; the 'me' who is an inventor, or a *swami*, or a businessman; the 'me' who is bound by thought, by experience, by knowledge.

The experiences, the influences, the traditions by which we are bound may be conscious or unconscious. Most of us are probably unaware of all these things that bind us. Being in a state of contradiction, we ask "How am I to get out of it?" ; or else we accept this inward contradiction as inevitable, and somehow put up with it. But a man who would find out if there is a way of living free of self-contradiction,

with all its miseries, must begin to inquire into the nature of his own consciousness, not only at the upper level, but at the deeper levels as well. And if you begin to inquire into yourself, you will inevitably see that your conscious and unconscious conflicts, which produce dreams and various other psychological states, are the result of a deep, inward contradiction. An ambitious man, whether he be a merchant, a politician, or a so-called saint, is essentially a self-contradictory human being. So do please see the psychological revolution that will take place when you begin to inquire into this whole problem of self-contradiction.

Self-contradiction is not productive of intelligence, but only of cunning. It produces a certain efficiency in adjusting oneself to the environment—and that is what most of us are doing. Self-contradiction, with its ceaseless effort, places a bondage on consciousness; and action born of self-contradiction is fundamentally productive of misery, though on the surface it may seem to be worth while. If your mind is in a state of self-contradiction, you may do good superficially, but essentially you are creating further misery. Of course, the streets must be cleaned, and all the rest of it—but we are not talking about that.

Now, seeing that any action born of self-contradiction, with its tension, will invariably produce misery, not only in the individual, but in his relationship with everything, one begins to inquire, "Then what is intelligent action? What is the action which is not born of self-contradiction, which is not the outcome of effort?" Please follow this, sirs. With most of us, idea and action are two separate things. The idea is over there, and our approximation to that idea is what we call action; so there is self-contradiction. Do you follow? The mind which conceives of action as an idea, and then shapes its action according to that idea, is in a state of self-contradiction, is it not?

So, then, is there an action which is not self-contradictory? We all know the action which is in contradiction with itself—that is our everyday life. The mind is very familiar with it. And seeing the misery, the confusion, the ugliness, the brutality, the fleeting joys that result from such action, the mind is now inquiring if there is an action which does not come out of the womb of self-contradiction. If it exists, what is the nature of that action? Surely, it is a movement which is not divided as *idea* and *action*. When you feel something very strongly you act without calculation, without bringing in the intellect and its cunning reasons, without thinking how dangerous it will be. Out of this pure feeling there is an action which is not self-contradictory. Perhaps I am not making myself clear.

Sirs, when you love something with your whole being, there is no self-contradiction. But most of us have not that wholeness of love. Our love is divided as carnal and spiritual, sacred and profane, and all the rest of that nonsense. We do not know the love which is a total feeling, a completeness of being, which is neither of the past nor of the future, and which is not concerned with its own continuity. That feeling is total, it has no border, no frontier, and *that* feeling is action free of self-contradiction. Don't say, "How am I to get it?" It is not an ideal, a thing to be gained, a goal you must arrive at. If it is an ideal, throw it out, because it will only create greater contradiction in your life. You have enough ideals, enough miseries—don't add another. We are talking about something entirely different: freeing the mind of all ideals, and therefore of all contradiction. If you see the truth of that, it is enough.

So, you see, intelligence is neither yours nor mine, nor is it to be found in any particular book; it is anonymous. When the mind listens to what is being said without accepting or denying, without comparing or evaluating, when

it uncovers the truth of everything as it goes along, such a mind is in a state of intelligence; and that intelligence is completely anonymous. Do you understand, sirs? All great things are anonymous, are they not? All the great temples of this country, all the great cathedrals of Europe, are anonymous. You don't know who built those structures. No man has left his petty little name on them. Similarly, truth is anonymous, and you must be in a state of anonymity for it to come to you. All creation is anonymous—the creation which comes from nothingness.

If you have diligently followed all that has been said, you will perceive that where thinking is based on experience, it is productive of self-contradiction. What does that word 'experience' mean? There is a challenge, and a response; the response to the challenge is experience, which becomes memory. Such memory is productive of thought, which says "This is right, that is wrong", "This is good, that is bad", "This is what I must do, that is what I must not do", and so on. As long as the mind is thus the residue of experience, as long as there is thought which has its roots in the soil of memory, there must be self-contradiction.

I know this is very difficult to understand, sirs, because for most of us life is based on experience. We move from experience to experience, and each experience, gathered as memory, shapes and conditions all further experience. But I am suggesting that there is a state of mind in which action is *entire*. There is then no idea apart from action; there is no approximation of action to an idea. If you really begin to inquire into that state of intelligence, you will discover for yourself the astonishing fullness, the entirety, the altogetherness of a mind that has no past, no future; and from that state, action is inevitable. Then living itself is action, and in such action there is no contradiction, but an extraordinary sense of bliss, a quietude which cannot be repeated, which is not

to be imitated or learnt from another. It comes darkly, mysteriously, without your asking for it. It comes only when you have gone into yourself very deeply and have torn away the roots of all your conventions, customs, habits, methods, ideals and superstitions. Then you will find there is love; and with that love there is no evil, neither is there the good, for both are bondages. It is only love that is free.

*December 27, 1959*

### III

#### TALK IN BOMBAY

I would like, this evening, to talk about knowledge, experience and time. But before we go into all that very deeply, I think it is important to inquire into the nature of humility; and to explore humility, we have to be clear that it is not something to be acquired, achieved, or cultivated. A virtue that is struggled after, cultivated, gathered by slow degrees, ceases to be a virtue. Surely, this is an important point to understand. Either you are without greed, without envy, or you are not; and if you are greedy, envious, you cannot cultivate non-greed, non-envy. This is very difficult for most of us to comprehend, because we think in terms of time. We conceive of humility as a quality to be gradually acquired, and thereby totally miss the very simple yet extraordinarily profound nature of humility; and without humility one cannot go very far.

The state of humility is essential for all inquiry. It is an 'altogether' feeling, without a centre from which the mind can say, "I am humble". A person who is positively or negatively determined to be free of any particular problem, is not in a state of humility. There is humility only when the mind wishes to see the problem clearly, whatever that exploration may reveal. Such a mind is inquiring. It wishes to know all the implications of the problem,

both the pleasant and the unpleasant; it wishes to see things as they are, without the urge to transform, to subjugate, or to sublimate what it sees; and only such a mind is in a state of humility.

As I am thinking aloud, please listen to what is being said with a sense of ease, rather than with effort. The moment you make an effort to listen, you cease to listen. You are listening only when there is a sense of ease, a certain poise of both mind and body, a state of relaxed attention. In that state of relaxed attention the mind will comprehend much more, it will perceive far deeper subtleties, than when it says, "I want to understand, and to understand I must make an effort"—which is, I am afraid, what most people do.

I am going to talk about a very simple thing, but its simplicity will not be seen by a complicated mind. Surely, you can see that which is very delicate, which has an astonishingly subtle feeling, only when your mind is at ease, when it is not struggling to get something. I am not talking about anything that you can 'get'. I want to convey the feeling, the quality of affection, of sympathy, of love—which has no words, which is not a pose, a matter of attitudes and values. I want to communicate with you about the nature of humility, and then to inquire into the process of knowing, with all its implications. But a mind that is merely trying to get or to cultivate that state of humility, cannot comprehend its nuances, its significance, its extraordinary quality.

So do please listen with a sense of affection, a sense of easy inquiry, of relaxed attention; because you are not going to get anything from me. I am not going to give you a thing, and you will be wasting your time if you come with the intention of getting something. If there is a giver, and one who takes, then both are in a state of non-humility. To comprehend the nature, or to know the feeling of humility, one must understand this wilful determination to be

ree of, to resolve one's problems. That is what most of us want, is it not? We want to resolve our problems, to escape from the everyday misery, conflict, strife, from the pettiness, the ugliness, the brutality and fleeting joy of our daily existence; so we are always groping after something. That is why we follow leaders, join various organized religions, go from one *guru* to another, hoping to find some means by which to transcend our anxiety, our fear, our lack of love.

We all have problems, there is no getting away from it; and as we live in this world from day to day, our problems are increasing, they are not growing less. The overwhelming weight of so-called civilization is destroying the quality of our own thinking, and we have lost the simplicity with which it is necessary to approach the innumerable problems that confront us. Because the mind desires to transcend or resolve its own problem—whether it is greed, envy, telling lies, being jealous, being lazy, fearful, or what you will—it is determined to find a way, a method, a system by which to do so; and this determination is what destroys humility.

Do please understand this, sirs. It is not something vague or cantankerous, nor is it a particular idiosyncrasy of the speaker. If you observe how your mind thinks in terms of transcending, going beyond, or resolving its problem, in that observation no effort is involved. But where there is effort—the effort to change, to transform yourself—there is no humility, there is essentially vanity. You have the idea that you have changed, that you have gained, that you have gone beyond, all of which gives you a sense of being important; therefore you never feel the real nature of humility.

What matters is to look at the problem, simply to look at it and be familiar with all its implications. If you study the problem, however painful, ugly it may be, if you look at it, move in it, live with it and—I really mean this—embrace it,

take it to your heart, then you will find that you are in a state of humility; and then the problem is quite different from what it was.

All problems are intensely complicated, there can never be an answer of 'yes' or 'no'. To go deeply into a problem, one must have this extraordinary quality of humility; and if you are listening, *really* listening, you are already in that state. As I said, I have nothing to offer you, I am only pointing out; and when something is pointed out to you, you cannot 'get' it, you cannot lay your hands on it—you have to look at it, you have to perceive, feel, touch, smell it. To put away all determination, all effort to change, is not a state of negation, neither is it a positive state. You are just inquiring. It is the impulse to achieve that gives to the mind a sense of its own importance, and achievement is what we call positive action; but such action only brings further confusion and misery. Whereas, if you are inquiring into the problem, which is this state of contradiction, with its innumerable urges and influences, in which each one of us lives—if you are simply aware of it, then that very awareness is its own action.

Look, sirs. Most of us are envious, are we not? And the problem of envy is quite complex. In envy there is everlasting struggle, comparison, competition, which sharpens the will, the determination to achieve, to go beyond. This is called positive action, and your culture encourages you in it. After all, the desire for fame is based on envy; and being envious, you suffer, you feel frustrated, you are anxious, fearful. Therefore you say to yourself, "I must be free of envy". Your mind is concerned with freedom from envy—which means that it is concerned with getting rid of the pain, the frustration, the transiency of joy which is implicit in envy. So there is conflict; and where there is conflict, there is inevitably a will which says, "I must go beyond".

Such a mind is not in a state of humility.

When the mind is aware that it is envious, when it does not dodge that fact, when it does not cheat itself or assume a hypocritical attitude, but simply says, "It is so, I am envious", such an acknowledgement of the fact brings its own action. But acknowledgement is not acceptance of the fact—there is a difference between the two. When you acknowledge that a thing is so, there is no doubt about it. When you merely accept it, there is always the possibility of *not* accepting it. So, when you are aware of the fact that you are envious, which means that you see and acknowledge it, then that very acknowledgement, that very self-critical awareness creates an action which is not the action of will. And I say such action comes from the state of humility, because it is not accumulative. The moment you accumulate the quality of non-envy, your mind is no longer in a state of humility—in which alone it can learn.

I do hope I am making myself clear; because, with an understanding of the nature of humility, I would like to enter into the problem of knowledge, into this extraordinary thing called experience, and into a much more complicated problem, which is that of time. Perhaps your mind is already weary after a long day's work in the office, or you may feel worn out with the family wrangles and adjustments, and all the other things that are going on in your life. That is why I suggest that you listen with ease, without strain. You are not learning anything from me, as you would in a school, and there are no examinations to be passed. No *guru* is going to tell you that you are doing well, and that you may go on to the next stage. You are listening to yourself—and listening to yourself is an art. You cannot listen if you are all the time striving to be or to do something. So, I want to talk very casually about experience, and do please

listen with a sense of ease. I want to explore, to look into it—and come out of that exploration, perhaps, not with experience, but with a mind that is innocent. Because it is only the innocent mind that can perceive what is true, that can understand the fullness, the quality of truth—not the experienced mind. The experienced mind is a dead mind. Whether the mind, being burdened with experience, can dissolve or wipe away all its experiences and be born afresh—that is what I want to go into.

We all have experiences. We experience irritation, jealousy, anger, hatred, violence, and so on. Going through the experience of anger, for example, the mind gathers the residue of that experience; and the residue remains, colouring all further experiencing. We are as easily flattered as we are insulted. Your mind revels in flattery, it is delighted if someone tells you how marvellous you are; and the feeling of pleasure evoked by those words is an experience which remains in your mind. Similarly, if someone insults you, you go through essentially the same experience, but not with pleasure, and the residue of that unpleasant experience also remains in your mind.

So experience leaves a mark on the mind, which is memory. There is memory as the necessary knowledge of mechanics and technique, and memory which is psychological, which is based on the desire to be important, to be *this* or to be *that*. Experience is the accumulation of knowledge, whether it be of outward or inward things. The experienced mind says, "I know how to deal with envy, with these wrangles and quarrels", or whatever the problem happens to be. So experience is the soil in which thought grows—the thought of being important, the thought of going beyond, and so on.

Please, sirs, do observe your own minds. I am only describing, and if you are merely listening to the description, you are not living. All descriptions

are second-hand, and you are living at first-hand only when you discover for yourself. A hungry man cannot live on descriptions of food, however beautiful, however enticing they may be. So you are listening, not to me, but to yourself. You are observing for yourself how the residue of experience cripples the mind.

If you live on the pleasure of flattery, or on the resentment of insult, surely your mind is dull, crippled. The person who has insulted you, you approach with antagonism, and the flatterer you regard with a feeling of pleasure; therefore your mind is not fresh to look, to inquire. You go through life gathering impressions, marks, scars, both pleasurable and painful, which remain in the mind and which you call experience; and from experience comes knowledge. So experience as knowledge prevents clarity.

Do please see this point, sirs. Character is not a matter of being obstinate in one's knowledge or strong in one's experience. There is character only when the mind, being fully aware of its accumulated experience, is free of that background and is therefore capable of clarity. Only a mind that is clear has character. Knowledge at one level of human existence is obviously imperative—I must know where I live, I must know how to do my job, I must be able to recognize my wife, and so on. But knowledge at another level prevents the movement of knowing.

So, what is knowing, and what is knowledge? What do we mean when we say we know? Do we know, or are we told, and then say that we know? Please, sirs, do go into this with me, pay a little attention. 'To know' is a very interesting word. How do you know, and what do you know? Please ask yourselves, as I am asking myself. Whatever one knows is based on experience, and therefore the mind is already conditioned by it; because all experience is conditioning, is it not? You have certain experience, you go

through some form of sorrow or pleasure, which leaves a mark on your mind, and with that conditioned mind you meet the next challenge. In other words, you translate that challenge in terms of your own limitations, against the background of your own experience, thereby further conditioning your mind. So the mind is more and more conditioned through experience. You don't have to accept this, sirs. If you observe your own minds, you will see it is a fact. The mind can learn only if it is not acquiring, if it is not accumulating, if it is moving. It cannot move, it cannot learn when it has acquired, accumulated, for that is a static state.

So, what is the movement of learning, knowing? I see that knowledge is accumulated through experience. A man may have mechanical or technical knowledge, or he may cleverly have learnt how to avoid psychological difficulties and maintain a state of inward comfort for himself; but I see that this knowledge is not the movement of knowing. Surely, the two are entirely different. Knowing is a constant movement, therefore there is no static state, no fixed point from which to act. I wonder if I am making myself clear?

Look, sirs. *Having listened* and *listening* are two entirely different states. Fortunately or unfortunately, some of you have listened to me repeatedly for ten or more years, and having listened, you say, "Yes, I know what he will say". That is not the state of listening. You are listening only when you do not translate what you hear in terms of what you have already heard. The state of listening is entirely different from having listened, gathered, and then listening further. When you listen further to something, you have ceased to listen.

I wonder if you have ever considered the nature of love? Loving is one thing, and having loved is another. Love has no time. You cannot say, "I have loved"—it has no meaning. Then love is dead; you do not love.

The state of love is not of the past or of the future. Similarly, knowledge is one thing, and the movement of knowing is another. Knowledge is binding, but the movement of knowing is not binding.

Just feel your way into this, don't accept or deny it. You see, knowledge has the quality of time, it is time-bound, whereas the movement of knowing is timeless. If I want to know the nature of love, of meditation, of death, I cannot accept or deny *anything*. My mind must be in a state, not of doubt, but of inquiry—which means that it has no bondage to the past. The mind that is in the movement of knowing is free of time, because there is no accumulation.

Sirs, you see, unless the mind is fresh, new, in a state of innocence, the nature of timelessness, of immortality, cannot be understood. I am not using that word 'immortality' in the ordinary sense. I am using it to connote the feeling of immensity, of that which is without measure, the feeling of a mind that has no boundary, no frontier. I am not referring to the immortality that my little mind wants in its desire to live perpetually. That is not immortality at all; it is a bondage, it is enslavement to time. I want to discover the nature of that immortality which is beyond time. To do this, my mind must be in a state of inquiry, that is, in the movement of knowing from moment to moment—not in a state of having known, which puts a stop to knowing. You see, this is the source of misery with most people. You have read your innumerable books, you know what this saint or that *guru* has said, and when you hear the word 'immortality', you immediately translate it to conform to the pattern of your thinking; and when you do that, you have stopped the movement of knowing.

Consciously or unconsciously, the mind has gathered many experiences; and can such a mind be in a state of innocence, free to look, to observe, to

act without always having this background of the past, this bondage to time? I do not know if it is a problem to you. Probably it is not. But it is bound to be a problem to anyone who inquires into life, because all that we know is frustration, misery and despair, with now and then a fleeting moment of joy. Though there is pleasure in it, with an occasional touch of joy, life for most of us is a dreadful thing, and our eyes are full of tears. Life is something for which there is no answer; it must be understood from moment to moment. But we are always wanting an answer, and the answer we find inevitably conforms to the pattern of what we think we know. And when it turns out, as sooner or later it must, that the answer according to a pattern is no answer at all, again we are in despair.

So, when the mind really begins to inquire into all this, it sees the necessity, if only intellectually, of experiencing a state which is timeless. Time is despair, because in time there is only tomorrow. That tomorrow may be stretched to a hundred tomorrows, but at the end of it there is no answer; agony is still there. So our life is chaotic, and there is no end to our misery, however much we may philosophize about it. That is why the inquiry into the nature of timelessness is not a vain, useless thing.

Time is the gathering of experience, and all gathered experience engenders time—the passage of *what has been* through *what is* to *what will be*. Time may solve technical problems; you may presently produce machines in which to go to the moon, and all the rest of it. But our deep human problems are never resolved through time—which means that they cannot be resolved by a mind based on experience, a mind which is the result of time. When such a mind becomes aware of the *impasse*, the blank wall before it, there arises a sense of despair. And seeing the nature of this whole time-bound process, one must inevitably inquire into what is called the timeless, the eternal—not to speculate

on whether there is an eternity, and how to arrive at it, which is a school-boy approach, but to be in a state of inquiry, in the movement of knowing, never saying, "I know". The man who says he knows, does *not* know.

So the problem is, really, can the mind be free of all its accumulated experience and knowledge, and yet not be in a state of amnesia? Can it feel the state of innocence, and therefore be free to inquire? Do you understand my question, sirs? As a Hindu, a Parsi, a Buddhist, a Christian, or what you will, you have lived so many years, you have learnt so much, acquired so much, suffered so much, and your mind is petty, shallow; though it is full of many things, it is an empty mind, and you go on living that way, accumulating more and more, till you die. Seeing the inevitability of death, you ask if there is something after death. When you are told that there is heaven, and all the rest of it, with that you are satisfied; and, still burdened with sorrow, you peacefully pass away.

I feel that what matters is to be in the movement of knowing, that is, in a state of inquiry about oneself. But this requires constant attention—*attention*, not effort. To pay attention is to be aware of what *is* when you are walking, when you are talking, when you are riding on a bus, or sitting in a cinema, or reading a book. If you can be so aware, then you will discover for yourself the movement of knowing, which is the real state of humility. Only the mind that knows this state of humility, is innocent. Then you are no longer a follower, and there is nothing second-hand about you.

At present you are all second-hand; you know only what you have been told about God, about virtue, about almost everything in life. You are what you have read, what you have heard, what your culture has imposed upon you; so you don't know anything, except your job, your appetites and anxieties. Being second-hand, you follow, you have

authorities, you have *gurus*, you have all these shoddy gods.

A mind that is in the movement of knowing, is in a state of humility, which is innocence; and it is only the innocent that know love. The innocent mind is love; it will do what it will, but it has no ego. So experience is not the teacher. Experience is the teacher of achievement, it is the teacher of mechanical things, as knowledge is. But a mind that is in the movement of knowing is free of knowledge and experience, therefore it has no past or future; and only such a mind can receive that which is not measurable by the mind.

December 30, 1959

## IV

### TALK IN BOMBAY

I would like, if I may, to talk this evening about the unfoldment of energy as desire, fulfilment and frustration; and perhaps, if our minds can extend so far, we may be able to go into the question of what is beyond the mind. But before we go into all that, I think it is important to be concerned with the problem of change.

For most of us, change in any form is a very disturbing factor. We like the well-worn path of habit and custom, and to bring ourselves to depart from that path we find almost impossible. For any change in habit and custom, we depend on influence; we think we have to be compelled to change. Circumstances play an important part in bringing about a change in our attitudes, in our values, as well as in outward things. I think we should go into this matter fairly carefully, so as to uncover for ourselves the ways of our own thinking.

We do change under the influence of propaganda, do we not? Influence in various forms is a very important factor in our lives. The influence of the newspapers; the influence of the books we read, whether sacred or profane; the

influence of social, educational and religious environment; the influence of our neighbours; the influence of the family, of the wife over the husband, and the husband over the wife; the influence of tradition and public opinion; the influence of diet, of climate—these and many other influences are continually shaping our minds. We are never free of these innumerable influences, of which we are the result; and there is no denying that we are the creatures of environment. You are a Hindu, a Moslem, a Christian, or whatever it is you are, because you have been brought up in a certain culture, with its particular traditions and ways of thinking.

So, influence plays an extraordinarily important part in our lives. We are not discussing what is good influence and what is bad influence. To me, all influence is evil, because it conditions and enslaves the mind. If the mind changes under any influence, it is changing only within the circumference of itself, whether that circumference is large or small.

In listening to what is being said, please do not take the attitude of a listener at a talk, but observe your own mind. Observe yourself and your environmental influences, and you will see an extraordinary phenomenon going on within the so-called free mind. I do not think the mind is free; but the mind can be aware of its conditioning, and of the innumerable influences by which it is conditioned. You know, certain words have a profound influence on us. Words like 'God', 'Communism', 'Chinese', 'Catholic', 'Jesus', 'Buddha', and so on, have an extraordinarily penetrating influence on our minds, and I think most of us are unaware of it. And unless we really grapple with and understand these influences, any change—whether it be an economic revolution, or a change in the outlook of the mind itself—has very little meaning, because we are then slaves to propaganda.

You are all listening to me. Why? It would be very interesting to find out.

Why do you come here on a hot Sunday afternoon? If you come to be persuaded, to be influenced, to be directed, to be told what to do, then what you hear will be reduced to mere propaganda. And propaganda—whether it be that of the politicians, of the organized religious people, or of the sacred books—has a most destructive effect on the human mind.

So, without understanding the influences to which most of us are such slaves, we shall never find out how to awaken energy; and energy is obviously necessary. I do not mean the energy of a well-read mind, or the energy of a well-fed body—although physical energy is part of it. A neurotic may have tremendous energy, just as an hysterical person may sometimes be very strong. In the same way, a man who is devoted to an ideal, often has extraordinary vitality. These are all manifestations of that energy which is the outcome of influence, and if you go into it very deeply you will find it leads to power. Power in any form is evil, whether it be the absolute power of a dictator, or the power of a wife over her husband, or a husband over his wife, or the power of society over the individual. But before we go into all this, it seems to me that, as human beings living in this mad, monstrous, competitive world, we have to understand the whole question of being influenced.

Why is the mind influenced? And is it possible for the mind to be free of all influences? Surely, a mind held within the field of influence is very limited, though it may be very active. All propagandists are very active, are they not? Yet such a mind is limited, conditioned, and therefore there is bound to be a constant battle within the limitations of itself.

Please observe your own conditioning and see how you are influenced. If you watch this whole process in yourself, you will perceive that everything you think, as well as your actions, your profession, your verbal exchanges, your

ideals and beliefs, are all the result of the innumerable influences to which you are consciously or unconsciously exposed. The mind is taking in everything, whether you are aware of it or not. The noise of the crows, of the tramcar, the words of the speaker, the movements of the person next to you, and so on—it is all being absorbed by the mind, either consciously or unconsciously.

So, is it not very important to ask ourselves whether the mind can be free of influences? I do not think it can be without first becoming aware of the influences by which it is swayed. Awareness of these influences is part of self-knowledge, is it not? And it is extremely difficult to be so aware, because influence is often very subtle. In advertising, they have tried subliminal propaganda—repeatedly flashing an idea on the cinema or television screen so rapidly that the viewer is unaware of it; yet it is absorbed by the unconscious. Similarly, you have been constantly told—it is the tradition of a thousand years—that you are a Hindu. You have been brought up in that tradition, and your job, your profession further conditions the mind; you are influenced, your thought is shaped by what you do, and so on. To be aware of all these influences is not easy. But once you begin consciously, deliberately, incessantly to ask the right question, which is to uncover in yourself these various influences, then the mind becomes extraordinarily alert; so it is necessary, it seems to me, to ask oneself that question.

The past—not only the recent past, but the past of centuries, with all its memories, its psychological wounds, its accumulated experience and knowledge—is influencing the present, the now. The now becomes the passage of the past to the future, so tomorrow is already shaped by yesterday. The present responds to challenge according to the past, and that response shapes the future. This is a very simple process, sirs, if you will observe it in your own life. If you feel that I have insulted you today, when

you meet me tomorrow, which is the future, the memory of that insult strengthens your feeling of resentment; and so it goes on and on. Don't translate it as karma. Karma is something entirely different, at least as I see it. For the moment we are just uncovering the problem of influence and change.

When we do change, it is generally through compulsion, through misery, through ambition, or some other form of influence. We change with motives of profit, we change through pain, we change through slavery to some ideology or system of thought. You can see this mechanical process of change operating in the mind; but such 'change', which is the result of influence, is no change at all—though it gives energy to the mind. The man who has a good job, who is secure in his family, who is building up a large bank account, has an extraordinary sense of energy. The man who has the capacity to talk or to write, to do this or to do that, the man who is gifted in some art or craft, the man who is trying to fulfil himself, to become something—such people have a great deal of energy; but when sooner or later that energy is blocked, there is frustration, a feeling of despair.

Do please follow this, sirs, not just as a talk to which you are listening, but as a description of your own mind, a description of yourself, of your daily existence. In your pursuit of profit you generate energy; but that energy, however cunning, however capable and efficient, always functions from the centre towards the circumference. And is that a change? When you change through compulsion, through fear, through motive, through the pursuit of a goal, is there a change?

Take the question of social or economic revolution, with its promised benefits, its plan to create a classless society, and all the rest of it. Is such a revolution a *real* revolution? Or is it merely a reaction, and therefore a modified continuation of the past? These so-called revolutions have always been only a

reaction, and there has always been a reversion to the former state, only modified. So a person who is concerned with total change, with real revolution, which is a transformation in the quality of the mind itself, and not merely a continuation of the modified past—such a person must ask himself, surely, whether it is possible to change without influence, without motive. Change based on motive, on influence, is merely a form of compulsion or imitation; therefore it is no change at all. Do you understand?

Look, Sirs: to restrain oneself from violence by practising non-violence, is no change at all, though in this country it is glibly talked about every day. Non-violence with a motive is still violence. The motive is the ideal, which is a projection of the mind; and a mind that conforms to the ideal, is imitative, it is still within the field of violence. I wonder if you see this!

Being violent, you say, "I must practise the ideal of non-violence". Non-violence is then the projection of your mind as a reaction to violence. Having adopted the ideal of non-violence, you proceed to discipline yourself, you struggle to conform to that ideal, you go through the painful process of constant adjustment to it—a process which is always superficial, but which is recognized by people as a form of virtue. And that is the strange part of it: we want people to recognize that we are virtuous, that we have become non-violent, or that we are on the way to non-violence. Recognition plays an extraordinary part in our lives, does it not? So you see how subtle is the desire for power.

If you examine this whole process very closely and objectively, you will see that the violent mind which has non-violence as a goal, which is motivated by the desire to change itself and become non-violent, is still caught in violence. So the question naturally arises: can the mind which is violent change itself without any motive? Or is it inevitable that all change must come from a motive,

from some form of influence? You see the problem, don't you?

We must all change radically, deeply, fundamentally, because, as we are, we are not real human beings; we are slaves to various forms of influence. And to discover human dignity, to awaken a real sense of freedom, one must surely ask oneself whether it is possible to bring about a radical transformation in the mind without any motive, without any compulsion, without any fear, demand, or influence. If you say that such a thing is not possible, that it is human nature to change with a motive, that for centuries it has been going on, then this is not a problem to you. But the moment you really begin to inquire into the whole question of revolution, of change at any level, you must inevitably ask this question, otherwise you are thinking very superficially. And it is superficial thinking that has produced this ruthless society with its wars, its so-called revolutions, its concentration camps, its dictatorships, and all the horrors of the police state.

So, if you are deeply concerned with the total transformation of man, then you must be aware of this problem of influence, in which is included seeking inspiration, going to the temple, reading sacred books, repeating mantrams—all the monstrously ugly disciplines you go through in order to be free, and which are a denial of real freedom. But if you are merely responding to this talk intellectually, you will go away as empty as you came. The intellect is very superficial. It can invent clever theories, it can argue or counter-argue, and go on playing that game indefinitely; but it cannot produce change, it cannot bring about a real transformation in the quality of the mind itself.

We are now concerned with real transformation; we are making a real inquiry into the problem of change and revolution. What is revolution? That is the question we are asking ourselves, because our times demand it. But this

is a perennial problem, it is not just the problem of our times, because the human mind is constantly deteriorating. This deterioration is like a wave that is always pounding at our doorstep, and a person who is really serious has to go into the question of whether change can only come about through influence, through fear, through compulsion, or whether there is a totally different kind of change.

The change that is brought about through influence, leads to power, does it not? It leads to power, to position—and that is what most of us want. Most of us want to be recognized as being somebody, either in this world or in the so-called spiritual world. Don't you all want that? From the lowest clerk to the highest politician, from the humblest disciple to the greatest *guru*, each wants to be recognized as a somebody—which is the desire for power. We all want to be important in one way or another: as a stamp-collector, as a scientist, as a bureaucrat, as a prime minister, as a good wife, as a good father, or what you will. We want to be recognized, we want to be important; and the moment you want to be important, you have tremendous energy. Look at your own daily existence, Sirs, see how this demand to be recognized, this struggle to be important, is always going on. A little flattery from a big man, and you purr like a cat. You want to bask in his glory, and you say, "He is my friend, I knew him when he was a boy"—you know all that childish stuff we play about with.

So, when there is change with a motive, that is, when change is brought about by compulsion, by influence, such a change is always towards power, towards being important—important, not only in this world, but important as a man of God, as a man who has control of his mind, of his body, as a man who is respectable in his virtue, and all the rest of it.

Do please follow this deeply, because we are concerned with our lives, not with words. All of us want power, all

of us want to be important in some way—even if it is only in the little way of a school-teacher with ten boys in his class. That is why we have degrees, titles, and all that nonsense.

One can see that where there is a compulsive change, either outwardly or inwardly, there is a sense of power, which ultimately leads to some form of dictatorship; and that this sense of power creates energy. I do not know if you have ever experimented with controlling your mind and your body, but if you have, you will know that it gives you an extraordinary delight to be completely their master. It gives you a great sense of power—much greater than the feeling of power that goes with any worldly position. We are not talking about electric power, and all that. We are discussing the psychological demand for power.

Now, energy as the sense of power, seeks its own fulfilment, does it not? That is, I want to fulfil myself through action; I want to be or become something. I want to become the manager, or the chief disciple; I want to understand, to change; I want to become the most famous politician in town; I want to be the ruler, or to have a degree, or to get a better job so as to earn more money—you know this acquisitive game we play with ourselves, and through which there is fulfilment.

If you observe, you will see that fulfilment is really the demand of a mind which is craving for power. When it is not able to achieve power and is therefore deprived of that fulfilment, it feels frustrated; and to escape from the misery of its frustration, it turns to something else through which it again strives to fulfil itself. If I cannot succeed in this world, I struggle to become a saint; or if I see it is unprofitable to become a saint, I pursue worldly success—and so it goes on and on. The urge to conform to a pattern of change creates energy, which gives a sense of power, and that sense of power seeks to heighten itself through fulfilment.

Watch yourselves, Sirs; I am not saying something extraordinary, but am merely describing the process of your daily existence. In that process there is immense sorrow, because a man who wants to fulfil himself lives inevitably in fear of non-fulfilment; and so the misery begins.

You see, we never ask ourselves whether there really is such a thing as fulfilment at all. A man may see, of an evening, a beautiful formation of clouds, and then wish to paint it; but if in painting it he is fulfilling himself, in that very act he has ceased to be a painter. Similarly, you may wish to fulfil yourself through your family, to carry on your name through your son, and you may call it love; but it is not love at all, however much it is recognized as love by respectable society. It is merely the perpetuation of yourself. Sirs, you may laugh it away, but this is a fact.

So, unless the mind is totally dull, utterly insensitive, completely enclosed within itself, it must inevitably inquire to find out whether it is possible to change without motive; because to change with a motive leads only to power and further misery. Is there a way to change which has no motive, which is not based on comparison, which is not a reaction to one's present state? Do let us be very clear on this issue, because we are always thinking in terms of duality: good and bad, rich and poor, heaven and hell, and so on. Seeing that change with a motive generates an intense feeling of power, which is a form of fulfilment with all its frustrations, limitations and sorrow, we want to escape from that by seeking the other; but the other is not to be sought, it is not a reaction, it is not the opposite of our craving for power. To change without motive is something entirely different; it comes unsought, like the change from morning to evening, from darkness to light. The mind sees the destructive and corrupting nature of the desire for power, with its frustration and misery, and its immediate reaction is to

try to escape from all that into what is called cosmic consciousness, truth, God—you know all those high-sounding words we use. But that is no change at all. It is merely a continuity of *what has been* towards the result of *what has been*, which is *what will be*.

So, is there a way of inquiry which will help the mind to be in that state of energy, of understanding, which is perpetual change, an eternal movement with no beginning and no end? Do you understand the question, Sirs? Please understand the question first, and do not ask how to get it, how to capture that eternality for your own use in your petty little house.

The question is this. You are all familiar with the craving for power, for recognition, for a position of importance, with its fulfilments and frustrations, its sorrows, agonies and fears. You know how that craving gives an extraordinary energy, without which you could not carry on day after day for fifty years with your jobs, your quarrels, your struggles and miseries. And the greater your capacity is, the wider is your field for the exercise of that energy, and therefore the more evil you create around you. Now, if you see the destructive nature of this craving for power, if you are aware of the whole anatomy of it, then surely you are bound to ask yourself if there is a way for the mind to change which is not an outcome of the craving for power. Do you understand?

We see that this craving for power, with the energy it awakens, is destructive, and that the ambitious mind is ceaselessly being pushed by the wave of deterioration, decay. If you say that all this is natural, inevitable, that human beings can live no other way, then for you it is not a problem. You accept corruption, decay. You are content to live within that framework with your sorrows and passing joys, with your imitated virtues and your invented gods. But if you begin to question, to explore, to discover, not because Shankara or Buddha said so, but through your own

endeavour, your own awareness, your own intelligence, then you will find you are unconsciously moving away from all that in a totally new direction. Then there is a change which is not a reaction, not fabricated by the mind.

Sirs, there is a state in which all virtue is, and that is the state of attention. To be totally attentive is to be totally virtuous, and therefore to flower in goodness, in beauty. But what do you do now? You find for yourselves a little haven, a placid backwater in the river of life, and there you move, you function, you 'change'. So perhaps you don't intend to be very serious about these things; but it does not matter. If you have heard only words, what you have heard may remain in your mind, because your mind is prone to propaganda; but these talks will then be merely one more noise among many other noises. Whereas, the man who really begins to inquire into all this noise, into the chattering of the mind, must inevitably come to that state of energy which is moving endlessly, and which is not caught in the backwater of his own desires.

So the problem of change, of transformation, is not to be thought of in terms of environmental influences. It is obvious that we need a revolution—an economic revolution, a world revolution—so that there will be one government; for the earth is ours. It is not the rich man's earth, or the poor man's earth; it does not belong to Russia or America, to India or China. It is *our* earth, yours and mine, to be lived on, to be enjoyed, to be cherished, to be loved. But that outward revolution can be brought about only when there is a revolution in your consciousness, a crisis in your own mind—that is, when you have ceased to be a nationalist, when you are no longer an Indian, a Parsi, a Communist, or any of those things, when you are a total human being. We do need a world-revolution, because only such a revolution will solve our economic problem, the problem of starvation. But politicians are concerned, not with the pro-

blem of starvation, but with a particular system, and they quarrel over which system is going to solve the problem. To bring about a revolution outwardly, you have to change inwardly. If you don't change, the challenge destroys you. You have to respond rightly to the challenge, otherwise you—you as a man, as a culture, as a race—are thrown away.

To inquire into the problem of inward change—which is much more difficult—one must be totally aware of this craving for power which we have. And can the mind, having grasped the significance of this craving, having understood that to change with a motive is a form of power-seeking, with all its nuances, its struggles, its pains, its fulfilments and frustrations—being aware of all that, can the mind knowingly, consciously, without any motive, let go? Do you understand, Sirs? That is the real renunciation of the world—not changing gods, or becoming a hermit, or joining a monastery, or putting on different clothes. Real renunciation, which is revolution, is the complete abandonment of power-seeking, of wanting to be important, to have recognition—which means, really, entering a world of which we know nothing. To enter a world of which we already know, is not renunciation. There is renunciation, revolution, only when we enter a world where the mind has never gone before, where it has not projected itself, where it has no future, no past, but only a sense of attention, of inquiry and perception. Perception has no past; perception is not accumulative; and it is only with the awakening of perception that there is an energy which is not a product of the mind. Don't translate it as 'God'—it has nothing to do with your ugly notions of God. There is an energy which is in itself creative, eternal; and without understanding that, without tasting it, embracing it, knowing the beauty of it, merely to think about God has no value. But it comes darkly, mysteriously, without your asking.

Our lives are not beautiful; our lives are tawdry, shallow, empty; our energy is limited, and it dies. We know hate, jealousy, envy—these are the things with which we are intimate. It is obvious that we have to abandon all that. To be kind without any motive, to be generous without calculation, to share the little that one has, to give with one's heart and mind and hand without asking something in return—that we must do, it is only civilized, decent; but it is not the other. It is like keeping the house in order, polished, spotlessly clean. To keep the house clean and in order is obviously necessary; but if we do it hoping to receive the other, it will never come. Keep the mind clean, alert, watchful; observe every movement of thought, see the significance of every word, but without any motive, without any urge or compulsion. Then you will find an extraordinary thing takes place: there comes an energy which is not your own, which descends upon you. In that energy there is a timeless being, and that energy is reality.

*January 3, 1960*

## V

### TALK IN BOMBAY

There are several things I would like to go into with you this evening, particularly sensitivity of mind, and meditation. But before we go into these things, it seems to me very important to have a certain clarity of mind, because without this clarity, the mind has not the capacity to think very deeply. Clarity, at whatever level, is completely necessary. If you are not clear about the way to your home, you get confused. If you are not very clear about your feelings, there is self-contradiction. If you do not clearly understand the ways of your own thinking, such lack of clarity leads to illusion. So, clarity in every direction is essential. And it is a most difficult thing, it seems to me, to have a

really clear mind, because clarity cannot be cultivated, learnt; rather, it comes into being through watching, through observing, through perception.

The clarity I am talking about is part of the sense of beauty. I do not know why it is, and I am not judging anyone at all, but there seem to be so few who are sensitive to beauty—to the beauty of a sunset, the beauty of a face, the beauty of a curve, the beauty of a tree, or of a leaf fluttering in the breeze; to the beauty of a bird on the wing, or the beauty of a gesture, of a word. I am not referring so much to the expression as to the feeling, the quality, the texture of beauty. I think sensitivity to beauty goes with clarity. Clarity is a state of total being, as beauty is. Beauty is not merely in the face, in the form; it is the totality of a human being, the totality of a tree, the vastness of the sky, the wholeness of sunlight on a leaf, of moonlight on the water. Beauty is a total thing. In the same way, clarity is not partial. There is no clarity if you are clear about economics, or how to get to the moon, and totally unclear about the ways of your own thinking, the operations of your own mind. Similarly, you cannot see the beauty of a picture, or hear the loveliness of music, when you are in a state of self-contradiction.

I think clarity is something that pervades the whole mind, it is the feeling of one's total being. Surely, Sirs, clarity is simplicity. But most of us think of simplicity in terms of action or behaviour; we think it has to do mainly with the manner of our speech, or the nature of our dress. In other words, we look upon simplicity as merely a matter of expression. We say a man is very simple because he has only a couple of loin-cloths, or because he has renounced this and taken up that. We judge simplicity by the garb, by the outward mode of life. But to me, simplicity is an inward state of being in which there is no contradiction, no comparison; it is the quality of perception in approaching any problem.

Life is becoming increasingly complicated, with more and more experts who are always contradicting each other; and a mind that wants to comprehend life, with all its complexities and problems, must surely approach it very simply. But the mind is not simple when it approaches any problem with a fixed idea or belief, or with a particular pattern of thought. I think simplicity has nothing to do with determination. A mind that is determined is never a simple mind.

Do please listen to all this, because unless you understand what I am saying now, you will not understand what I shall try to say about the mind and meditation. Without experiencing this total feeling of clarity, of simplicity, this extraordinary sense of beauty, you cannot possibly comprehend the complex machinery which we call the mind. Most of us have preconceived ideas about the mind. We have come to a conclusion as to what the mind is, or what it should be, and we approach it with that conclusion, with that belief; so it becomes very difficult if not impossible for us to understand the mind.

First of all, your mind is not simple, is it? A simple mind, surely, is one that functions, that thinks and feels without a motive.

Do please pay a little attention to what is being said. You may have heard the previous talks, or you may have read what has already been said, but please listen now so as to experience, as you are listening, this feeling, this movement of life in which there is no motive.

Where there is a motive, there must be a way, a method, a practice, a system of discipline. The motive is brought about by the desire for an end, for a goal, and to achieve that goal there must be a way, some form of discipline; and such a mind is not simple, such a mind is not clear, because it creates conflict within itself. One has to begin by perceiving for oneself the very simple fact that where there is a motive, there is self-contradiction in living. To me, meditation is a freeing

of the mind from all motives; and this requires an astonishing attention to the whole problem of goals, systems, practices, disciplines.

So, I would like to describe the mind; and in listening to the description, please also be aware of the nature of your own mind.

The mind is not merely the container of thoughts, it is also the thoughts which it contains, as well as the limitations which time has placed upon it; and it is also something which is not of time. To function smoothly, like a fine machine, is surely one of the qualities of a good mind; so also is the capacity to reason clearly without conclusions, and to discern without prejudice. The mind is likewise the feeling of being distinct, separate; it is also memory, the capacity to experience and to store that experience as knowledge. The mind is also time—time in the sense of looking back to the things that have been, and looking forward to that which will be; time as before and after. All these elements go to make up the mind.

But the mind is also something covering all this, something which is not merely a word and the recognition of that word. The mind, surely, is like the sky, in which everything is contained. A tree is not merely the leaf, the flower, the branch, the trunk, or the root; it is a totality which includes all these things. Similarly, the mind is a totality; and to feel the totality of the mind, to be aware of it, is really the beginning of meditation. If we do not feel the totality of the mind, we reduce it to a mere machine—which it is for most of us.

For most of us the mind is a word, a symbol, an image; it is a process of naming out of the background of memory, experience. Having learnt a certain job or profession, my mind continues to function automatically; having established a certain relationship with my wife or husband, with my children, with society, I carry on without further thought. My responses to various stimuli are mechanical. My mind does

not want to be disturbed; it does not want to question, to be made uncertain, so it establishes a pattern of conduct, of thought, a pattern of relationship to man and to nature, as well as to possessions, things.

This is surely true for most of us, as we know if we are at all observant of the operation of our own minds. Just see how slavish your mind is to words like 'love', 'God', 'Communism', 'India', 'Gita'. The mind invents symbols, and becomes a slave to the symbols; and then the symbols become far more important than the action of living.

Please, Sirs, I am not describing something foreign; I am describing a process which is actually taking place in the daily existence of each one of us. And I do not see how the mind can delve deeply within itself if it is not free of these symbols, of these words whose hold on the mind is the outcome of our experiences, our memories. The mind accumulates knowledge, which is essentially the symbol, the word; and if the mind is unable to free itself from the symbol, from the word, from the memory which is knowledge, then it can never wander into the wider fields of itself.

Obviously, we cannot forget the things we must know. We cannot forget how to speak; we cannot forget the way home; we cannot forget our various professions, or the techniques which have been developed through science. We must have all this, and we cannot forget it. But there is the other part of the mind which projects itself in time, which creates the future as the goal to be achieved. So the mind as we know it, is time; it is the result of time—time as before and after, time as a process of living in the past or in the future, which obviously denies the understanding of the present. I am not talking of chronological time, but of time as a psychological necessity for the unfoldment of the gradual process of achievement which we call evolution. We say we must have time to understand—time being the future.

I hope I am making all this clear, and not complicating it. But life is complicated, the mind is complicated. One has to look into all these problems for oneself, and not just say, "Help me to be free of time". What one can do, surely, is to be fully aware of all these patterns of the mind, and slip through them, as it were, to a state which is not measured by the mind; because whatever the mind does to free itself will always be within the field of time. Any effort the mind makes will further limit the mind, because effort implies the struggle towards a goal; and when you have a goal, a purpose, an end in view, you have placed a limit on the mind; and it is with such a mind that you are trying to meditate.

Do you understand, Sirs? First, please see the problem. The problem is not how to meditate, or on what to meditate, but whether the mind is capable of meditation at all. We have been told that we must meditate, and through meditation we hope to achieve a result—happiness, God, truth, or what you will. So we make an effort to meditate; and where there is effort, there is the element of time. We say, "Through discipline, through practice, through control, through the gradual process of time, I shall achieve an understanding of what God is".

To me, that is not meditation at all. It is sheer self-hypnosis, a projection of one's own illusions and experiences—which may give you visions. But to find out what meditation is, surely, you must understand the nature of the mind that approaches the problem. You want to meditate because you have read or been told about the extraordinary nature of meditation. You have heard that there is in it a certain sense of beauty, a certain quality of peace, of silence; so you control, discipline your mind in an effort to meditate, hoping to realize that silence, that peace.

Now, before you can realize that silence, before you can find out what truth is, what God is, you must

understand the mind which is meditating; otherwise, whatever it does, the mind will still be playing within the field of its own knowledge and conditioning. You may awaken certain capacities, you may have visions, and all the rest of it; but it will all be a form of delusion. If you like to delude yourself, if you accept delusion, then by all means keep on playing with it. But if you really want to find out what meditation is, surely you must begin, not by asking how to meditate, but by inquiring to find out whether the mind which is approaching the problem, is capable of understanding the problem.

I do not know if you realize how mechanical the mind is. Whatever it touches becomes mechanical. This evening I see something totally new, and that newness is experienced by the mind; but tomorrow that experience becomes mechanical, because I want to repeat the sensation, the pleasure of it. I establish a process, I set up a method through which I seek to recapture that newness; so it becomes mechanical. Everything the mind touches, inevitably becomes mechanical, non-creative.

So, the question is: can my mind realize the nature of its own mechanical habits? Can it just be aware of the fact of what *is*, and not ask how to change it, how to break it down? I think the simple realization of the fact, of the actual fact of what *is*, brings clarity.

Surely, it is important to understand this; because most of us try to move away from what *is* towards what *should* be, which creates a great many problems and contradictions. So I just want to know what *is*; that is all, nothing else. I am not interested in what *should* be. I want to know my mind as it is, with all its contradictions, its jealousies, its hopes and despairs, its aggressiveness, its envy, its capacity to deceive. And the moment I see actually what *is*, there is clarity—a clarity which will help me to go much deeper into what *is*.

For most of us, what *is* is not of interest; therefore it does not open up the

capacity to enter into what *is*. We think that by having an ideal we can transform what *is* into what *should* be—that the ideal, the what *should* be will awaken the capacity to understand what *is*. But I feel quite the contrary is true: that the capacity to delve into what *is* comes into being when we observe what *is* with undivided attention.

Our whole existence is what *is*, and not what *should* be. The what *should* be, the ideal, has no reality whatsoever. You may create an ideal, and you may be committed to that ideal, calling it reality; but the ideal is a reaction to what *is*, and reaction is never the real. The real is what *is*, it is our daily existence. The what *is* may be produced by the past, and it may have a future; but the important thing, it seems to me, is for the mind to put aside the past and the future, and be wholly concerned with the present, with what *is*—go into it profoundly, and not just remain on the surface by saying, “Well, that is my life, that is the way life goes”, and so on. Life is this extraordinary thing which we call the past, the time before, as well as the future, the time after; but life is much wider, much deeper, it has a far more profound significance, if the mind can go into it through the present.

To put it differently, all experiencing is conditioned by past experience. If one observes, there is actually only the state of experiencing. But what is experienced is immediately translated into memory, which then conditions further experiencing. The state of experiencing is conditioned by your background as a Hindu, a Moslem, a Christian, or what you will, with all its beliefs and superstitions.

You will get it, perhaps, as I talk about it; but the description is never the real. What is real is seeing the truth instantaneously, because truth has no future. You cannot say, “I will see it tomorrow”. Truth has no past, it has no continuity, and that is the beauty, the simplicity and clarity of truth.

When the mind which is mechanical investigates to find out what meditation is, it wants to bring meditation into the field of the known. After all, the mind itself is the known; it is nothing else. The mind is not the unknown. And when the mind, which is the known, tries to uncover the unknown, it invents methods, systems, practices, disciplines to that end. I hope you are following, somewhat.

Now, the problem is not how the mind, which is the known, is to uncover the unknown, because it cannot. What it can do is to be aware of its own process, which is the process of the known—and it cannot do anything else. It cannot proceed to uncover the unknown, because it has not that capacity. You may stand on your head, breathe in different ways, practise a discipline, control your thoughts, or do anything else you like; but whatever the mind does, it can never understand, or capture, or feel the unknown.

Then what is meditation?

Now, sirs, as I describe it, please follow the description as though you were meditating. To me, meditation is of the highest importance, because all life is meditation—meditation in the sense of a state of living in which the frontiers of the mind are broken down, in which there is no self, no centre and therefore no circumference. Without meditation, life becomes very shallow, mechanical. So meditation is necessary; it is as essential as eating, as breathing. Therefore please follow this, not just verbally, but actually experiencing it as we go along—which means not introducing what you have read or been taught about meditation, because then you are not observing, you are not experimentally following.

Meditation, surely, can never be a process of concentration, because the highest form of thinking is negative thinking. Positive thinking is destructive to inquiry, to discovery. I am thinking aloud, negatively. Through negation there is creation. Negation is

not the opposite of the positive, but a state in which there is neither the positive nor its reaction as the negative. It is a state of complete emptiness; and it is only when the mind is completely empty, in this sense, that there is creation. Whatever is born out of that emptiness, is negative thinking, which is not confined by any positivism or negativity on the part of the mind itself.

So, concentration is not meditation. If you observe, you will see that concentration is a form of exclusion; and where there is exclusion, there is a thinker who excludes. It is the thinker, the excluder, the one who concentrates, that creates contradiction, because then there is a centre from which there can be a deviation, a distraction. So, concentration is not the way of meditation, it is not the way to the uncovering of that which may be called the immeasurable. Concentration implies exclusion, it implies the thinker who is making an effort to concentrate on something. But the state of attention, which is not concentration, has no frontier; it is a giving of your whole being to something, without exclusion.

Now, will you please experiment with something as I am talking? See if you can be in this state of attention, so that not only is your mind functioning, but your whole being is awake. Don't say, "What do you mean by my 'whole being'?" It does not matter. Give your whole attention—which means hearing the noise of the bus, of the tramcar, and listening to the silence. If you give your whole attention, you will find that you are also listening to what is being said with an astonishing focus, acumen; but if you merely concentrate, there is exclusion, and therefore no attention.

Concentration is a narrowing down of the mind. To narrow down the mind may be very effective in the case of a school-boy in a class; but we are concerned with the total process of living, and to concentrate exclusively on any particular aspect of life, belittles

life. Whereas, when there is this quality of attention, then life is endless, it cannot be measured by the mind.

You have been told that there are different ways to meditate on reality, on God—whatever word you care to use. How can there be ways, methods, systems by which to arrive at something that is living? To that which is static, fixed, dead, there can be a way, a definite path, but not to that which is living. If you want to understand your wife, your neighbour, your friend, there is no 'way' to do it; there is no system by which to understand a living human being. Similarly, you cannot go to that which is living, dynamic, through any way or method. But you reduce reality, God, or what name you will, to a static thing, and then invent methods by which to reach it.

So, concentration is not the way of meditation, nor can any method, system, or practice lead you to reality. If you see the truth of this—that no system of any kind, however subtle, however new or well-seasoned in tradition, can lead you to reality—then you will never again enter into that field of delusion, and your mind has already broken loose from its moorings to the past; therefore it is in a state of meditation.

In meditation there is also the problem of the unknown. The mind, as I said, is the known—the known being that which has been experienced. Now, with that measure we try to know the unknown. But the known can obviously never know the unknown; it can know only what it has experienced, what it has been taught, what it has gathered. So, can the mind—please follow this carefully, sirs—can the mind see the truth of its own incapacity to know the unknown?

Surely, if I see very clearly that my mind cannot know the unknown, there is absolute quietness. Do you understand, sirs? If I feel that I can capture the unknown with the capacities of the known, I make a lot of noise; I talk, I reject, I choose, I try to find a way to it.

But if the mind realizes its own absolute incapacity to know the unknown, if it perceives that it cannot take a single step towards the unknown, then what happens? Then the mind becomes utterly silent. It is not in despair; it is no longer *seeking* anything.

The movement of search can only be from the known to the known; and all that the mind can do is to be aware that this movement will never uncover the unknown. Any movement on the part of the known, is still within the field of the known. That is the only thing I have to perceive; that is the only thing the mind has to realize. Then, without any stimulation, without any purpose, the mind is silent.

Have you not noticed that love is silence?—it may be while holding the hand of another, or looking lovingly at a child, or taking in the beauty of an evening. Love has no past or future; and so it is with this extraordinary state of silence. And without this silence, which is complete emptiness, there is no creation. You may be very clever in your capacity; but where there is no creation, there is destruction, decay, and the mind withers away.

When the mind is empty, silent; when it is in a state of complete negation—which is not blankness, nor the opposite of being positive, but a totally different state in which all thought has ceased—only then is it possible for that which is unnameable to come into being.

January 6, 1960

## VI

### TALK IN BOMBAY

This afternoon I would like to talk with you, if I may, about sorrow, will, and fear. Most of us live in a world of myth, of symbols, of make-believe, which is much more important to us than the world of actuality. Because we do not understand the actual world of everyday

living, with all its misery and strife, we try to escape from it by creating a world of make-believe, a world of gods, of symbols, of ideas and images; and where there is this flight from the actual to the make-believe, there is always contradiction, sorrow. If we would be free of sorrow, surely, we must understand the world of make-believe into which we are constantly escaping. The Hindu, the Moslem, the Buddhist, the Christian—they all have their make-believe world of symbols and images, and they are caught in it. To them, the symbol has greater significance and is much more important than living; it is embedded in the unconscious, and it plays an immense part in the life of all those who belong to one or other of the various cultures, civilizations, or organized religions. So, if we would be free of sorrow, I think it is important, first of all, to understand the make-believe world in which we live.

If you walk down the road, you will see the splendour of nature, the extraordinary beauty of the green fields and the open skies; and you will hear the laughter of children. But in spite of all that, there is a sense of sorrow. There is the anguish of a woman bearing a child; there is sorrow in death; there is sorrow when you are looking forward to something, and it does not happen; there is sorrow when a nation runs down, goes to seed; and there is the sorrow of corruption, not only in the collective, but also in the individual. There is sorrow in your own house, if you look deeply—the sorrow of not being able to fulfil, the sorrow of your own pettiness or incapacity, and various unconscious sorrows.

There is also laughter in life. Laughter is a lovely thing—to laugh without reason, to have joy in one's heart without cause, to love without seeking anything in return. But such laughter rarely happens to us. We are burdened with sorrow; our life is a process of misery and strife, a continuous disintegration, and we almost never know what it is to love with our whole being.

One can see this sorrowful process going on in every street, in every house, in every human heart. There is misery, passing joy, and a gradual decay of the mind; and we are always seeking a way out. We want to find a solution, a means or a method by which to resolve this burden of life, and so we never actually look at sorrow. We try to escape through myths, through images, through speculation; we hope to find some way to avoid this weight, to stay ahead of the wave of sorrow.

I think we are familiar with all this. I am not instructing you about sorrow. And it would be absurd if you suddenly tried to feel sorrow as you are sitting here listening—or if you tried to be cheerful; it would have no meaning. But if one is at all aware of the narrowness, the shallowness, the pettiness of one's own life, if one observes its incessant quarrels, its failures, the many efforts one has made that have produced nothing but a sense of frustration, then one must inevitably experience this thing called sorrow. At whatever level, however slightly or however deeply, one must know what sorrow is. Sorrow follows us like our shadow, and we do not seem able to resolve it. So I would like, if I may, to talk over with you the ending of sorrow.

Sorrow has an ending, but it does not come about through any system or method. There is no sorrow when there is perception of what *is*. When you see very clearly what *is*—whether it be the fact that life has no fulfilment, or the fact that your son, your brother, or your husband is dead; when you know the fact as it actually is, without interpretation, without having an opinion about it, without any ideation, ideals, or judgments, then I think there is the ending of sorrow. But with most of us there is the will of fear, the will of discontent, the will of satisfaction.

Please do not merely listen to what is being said, but be aware of yourself; look at your own life as if it were your face reflected in a mirror. In a mirror,

you see what *is*—your own face—without distortion. In the same way, do please look at yourself now, without any likes or dislikes, without any acceptance or denial of what you see. Just look at yourself, and you will see that the will of fear is reigning in your life. Where there is will—the will of action, of discontent, the will of fulfilment, of satisfaction—there is always fear. Fear, will, and sorrow go together; they are not separate. Where there is will, there is fear; where there is fear, there is sorrow. By 'will' I mean the determination to be something, the determination to achieve, to become, the determination which denies or accepts. Surely, these are the various forms of will, are they not? Because where there is will, there is conflict.

Do look at this, and understand not just what I am saying, but the implications of will. Unless we understand the implications of will, we shall not be able to understand sorrow.

Will is the outcome of the contradictions of desire; it is born of the conflicting pulls of 'I want' and 'I don't want', is it not? The many urges, with their contradictions and reactions, create the will of satisfaction, or of discontent; and in that will, there is fear. The will to achieve, to be, to become—this, surely, is the will that engenders sorrow.

Sirs, what do we mean by sorrow? You see a child with a healthy body and a lovely face, with bright, intelligent eyes and a happy smile. As he grows older, he is put through the machine of so-called education. He is made to conform to a particular pattern of society, and that joy, that spontaneous delight in life, is destroyed. It is sad to see such things happen, is it not? It is sad to lose someone whom you love. It is sad to realize that one has responded to all the challenges of life in a petty, mediocre way. And is it not sad when love ends in a small backwater of this vast river of life? It is also sad when ambition drives you, and you achieve—only to find frustration. It is sad to realize how small the

mind is—not someone else's, but one's own mind. Though it may acquire a great deal of knowledge, though it may be very clever, cunning, erudite, the mind is still a very shallow, empty thing; and the realization of this fact does bring a sense of sadness, sorrow.

But there is a much more profound sadness than any of these—the sadness that comes with the realization of loneliness, isolation. Though you are among friends, in a crowd, at a party, or talking to your wife or husband, you suddenly become aware of a vast loneliness; there is a sense of complete isolation, which brings sorrow. And there is also the sorrow of ill-health.

We know that these various forms of sorrow exist. We may not actually have experienced them all, but if we are observant, aware of life, we know they do exist; and most of us want to escape from them. We do not want to understand sorrow, we do not want to look at it; we do not say, "What is it all about?" All that we are concerned with is to escape from sorrow. It is not unnatural, it is an instinctive movement of desire; but we accept it as inevitable, and so the escapes become far more important than the fact of sorrow. In escaping from sorrow, we get lost in the myth, in the symbol; therefore we never inquire to find out if there is an ending to sorrow.

After all, life does bring problems. Every minute life poses a challenge, makes a demand; and if one's response is inadequate, that inadequacy of response breeds a sense of frustration. That is why, for most of us, the various forms of escape have become very important. We escape through organized religions and beliefs; we escape through the symbol, the image, whether graven by the mind or by the hand. If I cannot resolve my problems in this life, there is always the next life. If I cannot end sorrow, then let me get lost in amusement; or, being somewhat serious-minded, I turn to books, to the acquisition of knowledge. We also escape

through over-eating, through incessant talking, through quarrelling, through becoming very depressed. These are all escapes, and not only do they become extraordinarily important to us, but we fight over some of them—your religion and my religion, your ideology and my ideology, your ritualism and my anti-ritualism.

Do watch yourself, and please don't be mesmerized by my words. After all, what I am talking about is not some abstract theory; it is your own life as you actually live it from day to day. I am describing it, but don't be satisfied by the description. Be aware of yourself through the description, and you will see how your life is caught up in the various means of escape. That is why it is so important to look at the fact, to consider, to explore, to go deeply into what *is*; because what *is* has no time, no future. What *is*, is eternal. What *is*, is life; what *is*, is death; what *is*, is love, in which there is no fulfilment or frustration. These are the facts, the actual realities of existence. But a mind that has been nurtured, conditioned in the various avenues of escape, finds it extraordinarily difficult to look at what *is*; therefore it devotes years to the study of symbols and myths, about which volumes have been written, or it loses itself in ceremonies, or in the practice of a method, a system, a discipline.

What is important, surely, is to observe the fact, and not cling to opinions, or merely discuss the symbol which represents the fact. Do you understand, Sirs? The symbol is the word. Take death. The word 'death' is the symbol used to convey all the implications of the fact—fear, sorrow, the extraordinary sense of loneliness, of emptiness, of littleness and isolation, of deep, abiding frustration. With the word 'death' we are all familiar, but very few of us ever see the implications of the fact. We almost never look into the face of death and understand the extraordinary things that are implied in it. We prefer to escape through the belief in a world hereafter,

or we cling to the theory of reincarnation. We have these comforting explanations, a veritable multitude of ideas, of assertions and denials, with all the symbols and myths that go with them. Do watch yourselves, Sirs. This is a fact.

Where there is fear, there is the will to escape—it is fear that creates the will. Where there is ambition, will is ruthless in its fulfilment. As long as there is discontent—the insatiable thirst for satisfaction which goes on everlastingly, however much you may try to quench it by fulfilling yourself—, that discontent breeds its own will. You want satisfaction to continue or to increase, so there is the will to be satisfied. Will in all its different forms inevitably opens the door to frustration; and frustration is sorrow.

So, there is very little laughter in our eyes and on our lips; there is very little quietude in our lives. We seem unable to look at things with tranquillity, and to find out for ourselves if there is a way of ending sorrow. Our action is the outcome of contradiction, with its constant tension, which only strengthens the self and multiplies our miseries. You see this, sir, don't you?

After all, you are being disturbed. I am disturbing you about your symbols, your myths, your ideals, your pleasures, and you don't like that disturbance. What you want is to escape, so you say, "Tell me how to get rid of sorrow". But the ending of sorrow is not the getting rid of sorrow. You cannot 'get rid' of sorrow, any more than you can acquire love. Love is not something to be cultivated through meditation, through discipline, through the practice of virtue. To cultivate love is to destroy love. In the same way, sorrow is not to be ended by the action of will. Do please understand this. You cannot 'get rid' of it. Sorrow is something that has to be embraced, lived with, understood; one has to become intimate with sorrow. But you are *not* intimate with sorrow, are you? You may say, "I know sorrow"; but do you? Have

you lived with it? Or, having felt sorrow, have you run away from it? Actually, you don't know sorrow. The running away is what you know. You know only the escape from sorrow.

Now, just as love is not a thing to be cultivated, to be acquired through discipline, so sorrow is not to be ended through any form of escape, through ceremonies or symbols, through the social work of the 'do-gooders', through nationalism, or through any of the ugly things that man has invented. Sorrow has to be understood; and understanding is not of time. Understanding comes when there is an explosion, a revolt, a tremendous discontent in everything. But, you see, we seek to find an easy way to smother our discontent. We indulge in social work, we get lost in a job, a profession, we go to the temple, worship an image, we cling to a particular system or belief; and all these things, surely, are an avoidance, a way of keeping the mind from facing the fact. Simply to look at what *is*, is never sorrowful. Sorrow never arises from just perceiving the fact that one is vain. But the moment you want to change your vanity into something else, then the struggle, the anxiety, the mischief begins—which eventually leads to sorrow.

Sirs, when you love something, you really look at it, do you not? If you love your child, you look at him; you observe the delicate face, the wide-open eyes, the extraordinary sense of innocence. When you love a tree, you look at it with your whole being. But we never look at things in that way. To perceive the significance of death, requires a kind of explosion which instantly burns away all the symbols, the myths, the ideals, the comforting beliefs, so that you are able to look at death entirely, totally. But most unfortunately and sadly, you have probably never looked at anything totally. Have you? Have you ever looked at your child totally, with your whole being—that is, without prejudice, without approval or condemnation, without saying or feeling, "He is *my* child"?

If you can do this, you will find that it reveals an extraordinary significance and beauty. Then there is not you and the child—which does not mean an artificial identification with the child. When you look at something totally, there is no identification, because there is no separation.

In the same way, can one look at death totally?—which is to have no fear; and it is fear, with its will to escape, that has created all these myths, symbols, beliefs. If you can look at it totally, with your whole being, then you will see that death has quite a different meaning, because then there is no fear. It is fear that makes us demand to know if there is continuity after death; and fear finds its own response in the belief that there *is*, or that there is *not*. But when you can look with completeness at this thing called death, there is no sadness. After all, when my son dies, what is it that I feel? I am at a loss. He has gone away, never to return, and I feel a sense of emptiness, loneliness. He was my son, in whom I had invested all my hope of immortality, of perpetuating the 'me' and the 'mine'; and now that this hope of my own continuity has been taken away, I feel utterly desolate. So I really hate death; it is an abomination, a thing to be pushed aside, because it exposes me to myself. And I *do* push it aside, through belief, through various forms of escape; therefore fear continues, producing will and engendering sorrow.

So, the ending of sorrow does not come about through any action of will. As I said, sorrow can come to an end only when there is a breaking away from everything that the mind has invented for it to escape. You completely let go of all symbols, myths, ideations, beliefs, because you really want to see what death is, you really want to understand sorrow—it is a burning urge. Then what happens? You are in a state of intensity; you don't accept or deny, for you are not trying to escape. You are facing the fact. And when you thus face the fact of death, of sorrow, when

you thus face all the things you are confronted with from moment to moment, then you will find that there comes an explosion which is not engendered through gradualness, through the slow movement of time. Then death has quite a different meaning.

Death is the unknown, as sorrow is. You really do not know sorrow; you do not know its depth, its extraordinary vitality. You know the reaction to sorrow, but not the action of sorrow. You know the reaction to death, but not the action of death, what it implies; you don't know whether it is ugly or beautiful. But to know the nature, the depth, the beauty and loveliness of death and sorrow, is the ending of death and sorrow.

You see, our minds function mechanically in the known, and with the known we approach the unknown: death, sorrow. And can there be an explosion, so that the known does not contaminate the mind? You cannot get rid of the known. That would be stupid, silly, it would lead you nowhere. What matters is not to allow the mind to be contaminated by the known. But this non-contamination of the mind by the known, does not come about through determination, through any action of will. It comes about when you see the fact as it is; and you can see the fact as it is—the fact of death, of sorrow—only when you give your total attention to it. Total attention is not concentration; it is a state of complete awareness in which there is no exclusion.

So, the ending of sorrow lies in facing the totality of sorrow, which is to perceive what sorrow is. That means, really, the letting go of all your myths, your legends, your traditions and beliefs—which you cannot do gradually. They must drop away on the instant, now. There is no method by which to let them drop away. It happens when you give your whole attention to something which you want to understand, without any desire to escape.

We know only fragmentarily this extraordinary thing called life; we have

never looked at sorrow, except through the screen of escapes; we have never seen the beauty, the immensity of death, and we know it only through fear and sadness. There can be the understanding of life, and of the significance and beauty of death, only when the mind on the instant perceives what is.

You know, Sirs, though we differentiate them, love, death, and sorrow are all the same; because, surely, love, death, and sorrow are the unknowable. The moment you know love, you have ceased to love. Love is beyond time, it has no beginning and no end, whereas knowledge has; and when you say, "I know what love is", you don't. You know only a sensation, a stimulus. You know the reaction to love; but that reaction is not love. In the same way, you don't know what death is. You know only the reactions to death; and you will discover the full depth and significance of death only when the reactions have ceased.

So, do please listen to this, not as a lecture, but as something which vitally concerns every human being, whether he is on the highest or the lowest rung of society. This is a problem to each one of us, and we must know it as we know hunger, as we know sex, as we may occasionally know a benediction in looking at the tree-tops, or at the open sky. You see, the benediction comes only when the mind is in a state of non-reaction. It is a benediction to know death, because death is the unknown. Without understanding death, you may spend your life searching for the unknown, and you will never find it. It is like love, which you do not know. You do not know what love is, you do not know what truth is. But love is not to be sought; truth is not to be sought. When you seek truth, it is a reaction, an escape from the fact. Truth is in what *is*, not in the reaction to what *is*.

*January 10, 1960*

## VII

## TALK IN BOMBAY

If I may, I would like to explore with you what is the religious mind, the religious spirit, and go into it, if we can, rather deeply. It is a complex problem, as all the problems of human existence are, and I think one must approach it very simply, with a sense of great humility; because, to explore such a problem deeply requires a clear mind, a mind that is not burdened with insistent and persistent knowledge. If you would look into any complex human problem, it is no good, it seems to me, bringing in all the knowledge, all the authority that you have accumulated. On the contrary, you must put it aside, and then perhaps you will be able to discover something original, new, something which has not been handed down to you by authority, or which you have accepted because of various demands and compulsions. So, as this problem is somewhat difficult, it is necessary, first of all, to see if one can suspend all one has learnt, all the traditions and impressions one has acquired, and discover for oneself what is the religious mind.

Life is getting more and more complex and difficult, not less. The pressures are becoming almost intolerable; and with the pressures, the influences, the ceaseless demands of the modern world, there is increasing envy, hatred and despair. Hatred is spreading; and despair is much more than the superficial problem of the young man who cannot get a job—that is only part of it. Nor is despair merely the feeling you have when you lose someone by death, or when you want to be loved, and are not. Despair, surely, is something much more profound. And to find a way out of despair, to go beyond hatred and this thing called hope—which is merely the reverse of despair, and in which we also get entrained—, it seems to me that

we must inquire into the question of what is really a religious mind, a religious spirit.

To inquire rightly, there can be neither acceptance nor denial. Most of us are either 'yes-sayers' or 'no-sayers'. We have many difficulties, and our response is often an attitude of acceptance, which is to say "Yes" to life; but life is too complex, too vast, merely to say "Yes" to it. The 'yes-sayers' are those who follow tradition, with all its pettiness, narrowness, brutality, who are satisfied with so-called progress, efficiency, who accept things as they are and swim with the current of existence in order not to be too disturbed. Then there are the 'no-sayers', the people who reject the world, and by rejection they escape into symbology, into all kinds of fanciful myths. They become monks, *sannyasis*, or join one of the various religious orders. I wonder which attitude we have, to which category each one of us belongs?

There is the saint, and there is the politician. The politician is a 'yes-sayer'; he accepts the immediacy of things, and replies to the immediate superficially. The saint, on the other hand, is a 'no-sayer'. He feels that the world is not good enough, that there must be a deeper answer; so he leaves, rejects the world. I suppose most of us neither reject nor accept very deeply, but are satisfied with a verbal "yes" or with a verbal "no".

Now, if we would really explore the question of what is religion, I think we must begin by being very clear in ourselves as to whether we are 'yes-sayers' or 'no-sayers'. There is the 'no-sayer' who intellectually denies the world as it is; he has revolted, but has not explored really profoundly the spirit of religion. Intellectually he has torn everything apart until there is nothing left, as there is nothing left of a flower that is torn apart and thrown by the path; and he is finally driven by his intellectual conclusions, by his despairs and hopes, into the acceptance of some form of religious belief.

Please, sirs, watch your own minds and your own lives. As many of us are not too intellectual or aggressive, we are satisfied with the easy, mediocre life; and though we may say "No" to the world—to the world of progress and prosperity, to the world of things—, nevertheless we are caught in it. So, actually, we are neither 'yes-sayers' nor 'no-sayers' in any vehement sense; we are neither hot nor cold. I do not think such a mind is capable of discovering in its exploration what is the religious spirit; and without that discovery, it is impossible to answer any of the vital problems of life, because progress, prosperity, the multiplication of things, only makes us more and more slavish. It is fairly obvious that we are fast becoming slaves to machines, to things, and we do not have to go into it very deeply to see that the superficial mind is satisfied with its own slavish state. It is satisfied with property, with position and power; it is satisfied in its superficial, imitative activity.

Now, as the mind becomes increasingly a slave, the margin of freedom naturally gets more and more narrow—and that is our actual position, is it not? That is our life. Being bored with certain things, we want more things, or more action, or we seek power. When these ends are not gained, we feel frustrated, we are in despair, and so we escape through a religious belief, through the church, the temple, through symbolism, rituals, and all the rest of it. If it is not that, then we become angry with the world—and anger has its own action. Anger is very productive of action, is it not? When you are angrily in revolt, it gives you energy, and that energy awakens capacity, all of which is regarded as something new, original. But anger, cynicism, despair and bitterness—surely, these feelings are not necessary to a real understanding of the problems of our existence. We know neither what is the good life, nor what our daily living is all about—this extraordinary process of misery and

strife, of pettiness, ugliness, calumny, avarice, this everlasting struggle till we die. So we invent a goal, a purpose, an end; and whether that end is immediate, or projected far away, as God, it is the outcome of a mind that is really in despair, in misery, in chaos. Surely, this is fairly obvious the moment you begin to think clearly, objectively, and not merely in terms of what you can get out of life for yourself.

Sirs, this question of whether there is a reality, whether there is God, whether there is something permanent, original, new, is not just our own immediate demand. Man has sought it for centuries. Thirty-five thousand years ago, on the walls of a cave in North Africa, man painted the struggle between good and evil; and always, in those pictures, evil is victorious. We are still looking for an answer—but not some stupid, gratifying answer of a schoolboy, of an immature mind, but an answer which will be really true, a total response to a total demand. I think we do not ask totally, and that is our difficulty; there is no total demand. It is only when we are in despair that we look, we ask, we hope. But when we are in full vigour, in the full stream of our existence, there is no total demand; we say, "Leave me alone to fulfil myself."

You know, this total demand arises only when there is complete aloneness. When you have explored everything about you; when you have looked into all the religions, with their symbols, their stupidities, their organized dogmatism; when you are no longer held by explanations, by words, by books, by ideas, by all the things the intellect invents, and have rejected them all, but not because you cannot find satisfaction in them—only then are you really alone. It is too immature to accept or reject things out of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. But when you are in serious doubt; when you observe, examine; when you ask questions and there are no answers except those offered by the dead ashes of tradition,

of conditioning; and when you deeply and totally reject all this, as you surely must—then you are alone, completely alone, because you cannot depend on anything; and that aloneness is like a flower that grows in the wilderness.

I do not know if you have ever been in a desert in springtime. There has been no rain, just moisture, and not very much of it. The ground is very dry and hard; the sun is brilliant. There is a sense of ruthlessness, of nakedness, of emptiness. And in the springtime, a flower comes up, a lovely thing—perhaps more beautiful than all the cultivated flowers in the rich man's garden. It has a perfume of its own, and a colour which is not the colour of the well-nourished flower in a lovely garden. It is a thing of extraordinary beauty, and it has flowered in a desert. And I think there is in complete aloneness a flowering of the mind, which is surely religious.

But, you see, that is tremendously arduous; it is hard work, and you do not like hard work. You prefer an easy, indolent existence—earning a livelihood, accepting what comes, and just drifting along through life. Or, if you don't do that, you practise some system, some form of compulsion, discipline. You get up every morning at 4 o'clock to meditate—by which you mean forcing yourself to concentrate, compelling your mind to conform to a particular pattern. You drill yourself incessantly, day after day, and that you consider hard work. But that, it seems to me, is a most childish way of working; it is not the work of a mature mind. By hard work I mean something totally different. It is hard work to examine every thought and feeling, every belief, without bringing in your own prejudices, without shielding yourself behind an idea, behind a conclusion, an explanation. It requires hard, clear thinking—which is real work. And most of us do not want to tackle that kind of work. We would rather accept a senseless belief, belong to an organized

religion, go to the temple, the church, or the mosque, repeat some words and get a little sensation; and with these things we are satisfied.

A man who goes every day to the temple, to the mosque, to the church—him you call a religious person. Or you say that the people who worship Masters, saints, *gurus*, are very religious. Surely, they are not religious people; they are frightened people. They are the 'yes-sayers'; they don't know and they don't explore, they have not the capacity, therefore they rely on something outside, on an image graven by the hand or by the mind. Seeing all this, and being aware of the misery, the cruelty, the unutterable squalor both within and without, surely, if we are to find a sane, rational way out of all this mess, we must inquire into the question of what is a religious mind.

Now, how does one inquire? Do please pay a little attention. What is the way of inquiry? How does one set about it? Does the state of inquiry exist when there is a positive approach, or only when there is a negative approach? By a positive approach I mean looking at the problem with a desire to find an answer. When I am frustrated, in despair, and I want to find an answer, there is a motive for my exploration, is there not? My search is the result of my desire to find a way out. So I *will* find a way out, but it will be very shallow and empty; I will rely on some authority, or follow a system, which will give me despair again tomorrow. Being unhappy, miserable, sorrow-laden, in a state of incessant conflict, I want to escape from this whole business; so there is a motive, and that motive creates a positive action; and such positive action, which is search with the demand for an answer, is very limited; it does not open the door to the heavens.

Do please understand this, otherwise you will not discover for yourself what is a religious mind, and the beauty of it.

So, that which you can never know through a positive action, cannot be approached with a motive, with a compulsion born of despair. That is a false approach. If you see the truth of this for yourself, then you can find out what is the other approach—which is not a reaction, not the opposite of the positive. Do you understand? I hope I am making myself clear.

One sees very clearly what the positive approach is. It is the approach which most of us indulge in. Being miserable, I want a way out; so I take a tranquilizer, or go to a *guru*, or to a church, or do some other foolish, ugly thing, and am satisfied. That is the positive approach. It is the approach of a mind that is in conflict, that is in a state of sorrow, confusion, and that wants an answer, a way out—which it seeks through the practice of a method, a system, or through some other positive activity.

Now, if the mind sees the truth of that positive approach, which is to see the falseness of it, then the negative approach is not a mere reaction to it. That is, I want to find out what is true, not what I would *like* to be true, so I do not bring my personality into it; I put aside my beliefs, my conclusions, my desire to escape from this intolerable misery. I want to discover for myself what is the meaning of this whole existence—but not according to my pleasure, or according to my fancy, or according to my tradition, which are all such stupid, silly and conditioned things. I want to find out the truth of the matter, whatever it is. So, for me there is no method, there is no authority, there is no *guru*, there is no system. And it is only such a mind—do please pay a little attention, sirs—it is only such a mind that can find out: a mind which has torn everything apart, which is not seeking any form of satisfaction or gratification, which has no end in view.

I wonder if you have noticed something in life. Life has no beginning and no end—in the beginning is the

end. To a man who wants an answer, life is very limited. For him there is yesterday, today and tomorrow, and in those terms he thinks of life. But life does not answer him in those terms. Life is endless, and therefore in life there is no death. There is a death only when we say, "What about me?" —'me' being the entity who has thought in terms of yesterday, today and tomorrow. As the 'me' who is in misery, you want to find a state of salvation where you will not be disturbed; you want to sit quietly and everlastingly in your own backwaters of ugliness. But have you not noticed that where the sky and the earth meet, there is no end, no division? It is all one movement. It is the mind that divides life from death, that struggles and creates problems.

So, if one can approach negatively this problem of what is the religious spirit, that negation is not a reaction to the positive. If it is a reaction to the positive, as Communism is a reaction to capitalism, then it is merely the same thing in a different form. To change within the field of conditioning, is not to change at all. But the negative approach is something entirely different; and it is only through the negative approach that the mind can explore and discover.

I hope, as I am talking, that you are perceiving for yourself, as a direct experience, the truth—that is, the falseness—of the positive approach. Just as you have everyday experiences of hunger, thirst, sex, the demand for position, power, prestige, and all the rest of it, so the experience of the positive approach to your problems is always going on, whether you are conscious of it or not. But if you clearly see the truth of it, if you actually perceive the falseness of the positive approach, and the limitations, the pettiness of a mind that demands an answer for its own satisfaction, then your mind is in a state of negation, which is really creative; for such a mind can explore and discover.

I hope you are not merely listening to explanations, the words, because the word is not the thing, it is merely a symbol; and the symbol is never the real. A man who is satisfied with the symbol is living with the ashes of life, with the aridity of existence. So I hope you are actually perceiving and experiencing the truth. And to such a mind, what is the question?

The question is: what is the religious spirit? You do a great many things in the name of religion, which are *not* religion. Having seen the truth of it, all that is out, it is finished, put away. Then what is the religious spirit? Surely, the religious spirit is a kind of explosion in which all attachment is broken, utterly destroyed.

There is only attachment; there is no such thing as detachment. The mind invents detachment as a reaction to the pain of attachment. When you react to attachment by becoming 'detached', you are attached to something else. So that whole process is one of attachment. You are attached to your wife, or your husband, to your children, to ideas, to tradition, to authority, and so on; and your reaction to that attachment, is detachment. The cultivation of detachment is the outcome of sorrow, pain. You want to escape from the pain of attachment, and your escape is to find something to which you think you cannot be attached. So there is only attachment; and it is a stupid mind that cultivates detachment. All the books say, "Be detached"; but what is the truth of the matter? If you observe your own mind, you will see an extraordinary thing: that through cultivating detachment, your mind is becoming attached to something else.

Now, the religious spirit is an explosion which shatters all attachment, so that the mind is not attached to anything. Surely, that is the nature of love. Love is not attached. Desire is attached, memory is attached, sensation is an abyss of attachment; but if

you observe, in love—whether it be for the one or the many—there is no attachment. Attachment implies the past, the present and the future. Do you understand, sirs? Whereas, love has neither past, present nor future. It is only memory that is time-bound—the memory of what you consider to be love.

So, the mind that is exploring, probing into what is called religion, is really a mind that is totally in revolt. You know, it is fairly easy to revolt against a particular thing—against poverty, against one's family, against tradition, or against a particular religion. And when we revolt against a particular religion, we generally join some other religion; we revolt against Hinduism, and join Christianity, or Buddhism, or what you will. Such revolt is merely a reaction, it is not total revolution, complete transformation.

Sirs, are you just listening to me, or are you watching your own minds? My words are the reflection of your own thought, of which you may be conscious or unconscious. I am describing your own minds; and if you are merely listening to words, and are not observing your own minds, then you will continue to be in sorrow and turmoil.

The revolt which I am talking about is against every form of attachment—but not as a reaction. You see the truth that your attachment to certain intellectual explanations has left you dry, arid. There have been minor explosions or reactions in your life which have left their marks on your mind, and you are attached to those marks. You may have withdrawn from this organization, joined that movement, followed a different leader, and so on. All these minor explosions and responses have left marks on your mind, and thus marked, your mind has become hard. This hardness is really attachment to what you have done, to the memory of your own experiences. And the total revolution of which I am talking

is the complete perception of the truth of all this; it is the very state of explosion itself.

Perhaps this is rather difficult for most of us to understand, because we are used to thinking of revolution in terms of changing from one form of conditioning to another. Today I am *this*, and tomorrow I want to change into *that*. Seeing poverty under capitalism, I say Communism is the answer; therefore there must be a revolution. Surely, any such revolution is only partial and therefore no revolution at all. Most alert and so-called intelligent people have played with Communism, with this and that, with ten different things. Having played with all that, their minds are cluttered up, confused, hard; and when such a mind asks, "What is truth? What is God?", it has no meaning whatsoever. What has meaning is to break all that, to shatter it completely, without any motive, without any urge or compulsion. This explosion, in which there is no place for satisfaction, or for any system, is the only real revolution. Then you will find, when the mind is in this state of explosion, that there is creativeness—not the creativeness which is expressed in a poem, or in carving a piece of stone, or in painting, but a creativeness which is always in a state of negation.

Now, sirs, this becomes purely theoretical for you; and theory, speculation, or living on the words of another, has very little meaning. But the mind that has really gone into all this, that has entered upon a pilgrimage of inquiry from which there is no return, that is inquiring, not only now, during this hour, but from day to day—such a mind will have discovered a state of creation which is all existence. It is what you call truth or God. For that creation to take place, there must be complete aloneness—an aloneness in which there is no attachment, no companionship, either of words, or thoughts, or memories. It is a total denial of everything which the mind has

invented for its own security. That complete aloneness, in which there is no fear, has its own extraordinary beauty; it is a state of love, because it is not the aloneness of reaction; it is a total negation, which is not the opposite of the positive. And I think it is only in that state of creation that the mind is truly religious. Such a mind needs no meditation; it is itself the eternal. Such a mind is no longer seeking—not that it is satisfied; but it is no longer seeking, because there is nothing to seek. It is a total thing, limitless, immeasurable, unnamable.

*January 13, 1960.*

## VIII

### TALK IN BOMBAY

Most of us, whatever our position in life, are in great turmoil—at least we should be, if we are not; because the various pressures of the world events and of the uncontrollable historical processes that are taking place around us, are pushing us all into a narrow groove, where the margin of freedom is growing less and less. And as each one of us is invariably seeking a way out of this turmoil, this confusion and misery, we join various movements, either political or religious, and we follow their leaders in the hope of finding a solution for the numerous problems which burden our lives. We are confused, and in our confusion we try to find someone who will lead us out of this turmoil and misery. It seems to me that we are very reluctant to go into ourselves and examine the problem directly. We want someone to provide a solution; we want a system, a philosophy, a *guru*, a leader to resolve our problems and lead us to peace, to inner quietude. As that is not possible, I would like, if I may, to talk over with you this going

within oneself, this unravelling of the process of self-knowledge.

We know that the scientists have conquered many problems, and that whatever is needed they are able to produce. If the scientists and the politicians would get together, they could also solve the problem of starvation, the problem of food, clothing and shelter for all, and stop the destruction of man by man. It could be done; but they are not going to do it as long as their thinking is based on nationalism, on motives of their own personal profit. And even if this far-reaching outward change were brought about, it seems to me that the problem is much deeper. The problem is not merely starvation, war, the brutality of man to man; it is the crisis in our own consciousness. Fundamentally, the problem lies within. But however intent and capable we may be, most of us are unwilling to go into ourselves very deeply. We want to change, to transform the world; but the real revolution, the total change is within, and not so much without. We find it extremely difficult to go within, and so we try to escape intellectually, or sentimentally, devotionally.

Intellectually we spin a lot of theories, we get caught up in words, in ideas. I wonder if you have noticed how eager we are to discuss theories, how quickly we get lost in words? When we play this game, we think we are being very intelligent, but it is really nothing at all; it is empty verbalism, it has no meaning. Sentimentally, emotionally, we cling to a system of belief, or we go from one system to another. We also get lost in so-called devotion to an idea, or to a leader. There is in all this a certain satisfaction, a temporary alleviation of our struggle; but sooner or later we find ourselves back in the same old position, with its many problems.

All these devices, it seems to me, are so futile; they are not solutions to our problems at all. It is only an immature mind, a mind that has not tasted love, that has not breathed deeply the per-

fume of sorrow—it is only such a mind that escapes into all these trivial things, which are mere entertainments. You find a *guru*, or you go to the temple, worship an image, which gives you temporary relief. Unfortunately, you are very easily satisfied by these temporary measures, and you try to make them permanent by setting up a habit of devotion, of following—following a *guru*, a political leader, or some other authority. Whether you follow politically or religiously, all following, surely, is evil; because following implies a desire for security, and the mind that seeks security is denying the impermanency of life. Life is obviously impermanent. Nothing in the world is permanent; and there is nothing permanent inwardly, inside the skin, except habit—habit of thought, habit of ideas. We are caught in these habits; and if we break one habit, we form another, which again takes on a certain permanency. So it seems to me that we are always evading the central issue, which is ourselves.

In referring to ourselves, I mean, not just the ego-centric entity of whom we are more or less aware every day, but the entity who is the result of society, the result of a particular culture or civilization, of climate and tradition. And unless the individual is deeply transformed, one cannot see how there can be a way out of all this chaos. I am talking of the individual who is not in opposition to the collective. At present there is only collective thought, from which our action takes place. This collective thought—whether it be that of Communism, of capitalism, of Fascism, or what you will—denies the individual; and all creation in life, all understanding, arises from the individual, not from the mass. Actually, there is no such thing as the mass, except in thought, in idea, to which we are slaves.

So, to understand this whole process of existence, it is necessary for the individual to shake himself free from

the mass, from tradition. To do this, one must go into oneself—there is no other means, no other way to open the door of life. What you are, society is. Society is not different from you. Though you may have a distinctive name, some property, a private bank account, and so on, you are part of society; you are not separate from it. When you say you are a Hindu, a Communist, or whatever it may be, it means that you are part of that culture, part of that particular society, which has helped you to think in a certain way. So you are a slave to various influences; and it is necessary, surely, to understand these influences or pressures, if you are to understand yourself, who are the result of them.

You are the result, not only of your father and mother, but of a thousand yesterdays, a thousand generations; you are the result of the whole of humanity. If you don't understand this, life becomes extraordinarily boring, an endless struggle with very little significance, giving rise to the philosophy of despair, or the philosophy of being satisfied with things as they are, which is the mere acceptance of existence. All this seems so obvious.

So, you have to see the fact that you are the world, and that without a transformation in yourself, without a total revolution in the mind, in the ways of your own thinking, you cannot bring about a fundamental change in the world. Especially in an overpopulated country like this, you have to start with yourself; there has to be a revolution in the world of your relationships. Sirs, goodness flowers in your relationship with another; and without understanding that goodness, all your social reforms and innumerable outward changes are only going to lead to further misery in a very superficial existence.

So, it seems to me of the utmost importance to understand oneself; but in this matter there is a tremendous reluctance on your part, because you say, "What is there to understand

about myself? I know my own reactions very well".

Now, before we enter into that, I think it is important to understand the significance of the word 'verb'. The verb implies, surely, an unbroken movement, an active present; though it has a time-element in it, embracing the past and the future as well as the present, the verb implies a total state, does it not? "I was", "I am", and "I will be"—if one goes into this rather deeply, one finds it to be a total state, an active present which is timeless. But most of us are caught in the "I was" and the "I will be"; there is no active present. The "I was" is memory, and the "I will be" is also memory—a projection of the past through the present to the future. We say, "I have been angry, and I shall not be angry"; so there is a lag, a gap; and this gap is used as a means to a future state. For most of us the verb implies, not just one state, but three separate states: "I have been greedy", "I shall not be greedy", and the lag between them, which is the effort to become non-greedy.

Now, I think it is very important to understand that the verb implies a total action, not a broken-up action. It has within it not only the overtones of what has been and of what ultimately should be, but it also contains that which is happening now. But most of us are unaware of what is actually happening now; we are concerned with the 'what has been' or the 'what will be'. If you observe your own mind, you will see this fact, which is an extraordinary discovery; that you are never concerned with being, but only with having been, and becoming. Unless we perceive this fact rather carefully, intelligently, and widely, we shall not be able to understand all that is implied in self-knowledge; and I think it is because most of us lack this understanding that we become so superficial in what we call our self-knowledge.

I am going to play a little bit with the implication of that word 'verb'—and I mean play, because unless one can play, one will never find out. Do you understand? Unless you are capable of laughter, real laughter, you don't know what sorrow is, you don't know what it is to be really serious. If you don't know how to smile, not merely with your lips, but with your whole being—with your eyes, with your mind and heart—then you don't know what it is to be simple and to take delight in the common things of life.

Surely, the verb, as well as the name of a thing, is dual. The name is never the thing. The tree, and the word 'tree', are totally different. The symbol is never the fact, never the truth; but to most of us, the symbol has become more important than the fact. We never look at the tree without the word; and the word destroys our perception of the tree.

Do please listen to what I am saying, sirs. The word 'crow' is not the living thing which disturbs us with its noise. But we get lost in the word, and thereby never examine the truth behind the word. So one has to separate the word, the name, from the thing; and one has also to understand the verb—which is much more complex and vital.

Take the verb 'to love'. If you look at it very closely, you will see that you are not loving. All you can say is, "I have loved", or "I must love". You think in terms of what has passed, and of what is to happen, or should happen—the 'before' and the 'after'. You are never in the state of *being*, which is a living thing, the active present. This active present, which is implied by the verb, has no future, no past; and it seems to me of the utmost importance to understand this.

As I said, most of us are never in the state of *being*; we have always been, or we *hope* to be, so time as a process of becoming is a very important factor in our life. But there is an active present in which the 'what has been', the

'what is', and the 'what will be' are all included, they are not separate; and one has to understand this extraordinary state of *being*, this living, active present. Existence is not what has been, or what will be; existence is the *now*, in which all time is contained. And the important thing, in listening to what is being said, is to comprehend, if you can, this state of *being* in which all time is included—to be aware of it without effort, to capture its significance without saying, "I must understand".

Sirs, goodness is not of the past or of the future; it is a present state of which the mind must be totally unconscious. The moment you feel that you are good, you are no longer good. The man who strives to cultivate humility, is vain and stupid, because humility cannot be cultivated. Humility is a state of *being*; it is not a virtue to be cultivated—which is a horror. Cultivated virtue is always a horror; for when you cultivate a virtue, you have ceased to be virtuous. When you are trying to be non-violent, you are full of violence.

So, with this understanding of the verb, in which 'being', 'have been', and 'will be' are all part of the active present, let us examine the nature of the self.

The self, the 'me' is a centre of thought, a centre which is conditioned by experience, by knowledge. As the motor of the bus that brought you here, like every other complex machine, is a result of the knowledge and experience of many people, so the self is the expression of a collection of experiences, memories, and therefore it is essentially mechanical. I think this is important to understand. The self is not a spiritual entity at all; it is purely the result of habits, experiences, memories, influences, an expression of the collective tradition and all the rest of it. It is a process of thinking based on memory, on knowledge, on experience, and, therefore it is mechanical. Whatever it thinks—whether it thinks of God, or of a

piece of machinery, or of a job—, it is still within the confines of its own limitations. When you talk about the higher self, the *Atman*, the soul, the indwelling God, and so on, it is merely a habit; you are repeating what you have been taught. The Communist has been taught not to believe in all this religious rot, so he will say there is no such thing as God, or the soul; it is all rubbish, a capitalistic invention.

So the self, the observer, the thinker, the experiencer, is not a spiritual entity; it is the mechanism of memory centralized as the 'me', with its various limitations. This is a fact. But you object, because you say, "Is there not a spiritual world, something permanent beyond all this?" When, being caught in the actual fact of mechanical habit the mind speculates about something beyond, such a mind is obviously stupid. That is why it is very important to understand this mechanism of memory, of habit, which we call the self, the 'me'.

Knowledge is mechanical. If you happen to be an engineer, your knowledge of engineering is something which you have acquired; and what you have acquired, learnt, becomes a habit. Whether you are an engineer, a scientist, a bureaucrat, or an office-worker, you establish a series of habits, and in those habits you are caught; your mind is held in the machinery of habit—in a habit of relationship, in a habit of thinking, in a habit of action.

Please, sirs, do watch your own minds. You are not merely listening to me, that is not important at all; but in listening to me, you are observing yourselves. And if you are in fact observing yourselves, you will see how the mind is caught in the machinery of habit. This is nothing to shudder or be anxious about, it is simply a fact; and the problem is to free the mind completely from habit, so that it does not continue in the old pattern, or establish a new set of habits in the process of relinquishing or destroying the old.

Habits, surely, imply a mind that does not want to be disturbed. As long as the mind wants to be secure—it does not matter whether it is an engineering mind, a mathematical mind, a scientific mind, a political mind, or the mind of a seeker after truth, whatever that means —, it inevitably falls into the groove of habit, and is unaware that it is running in a groove. So one has to become conscious of the fact that one's mind, because it is seeking pleasure, security, a sense of non-disturbance, falls into a groove. Just to be conscious, aware of this fact, is what matters—not how to break down a particular habit. The very desire to break down a habit, produces another habit.

Now, who is it that is aware? Who is the observer, the one who watches the operation of these habits? That is the question you will invariably ask, is it not? If you look very closely, you will see that there is no observer at all; it is merely one habit observing another habit.

Look, sirs: when you are in the very movement of an action, there is neither the observer nor the observed. When, for instance, you are very angry, in the full intensity of that feeling there is no separate entity who observes and tries to alter what is observed. Do you understand? The actual fact is that, in the moment of experience, there is neither the observer nor the thing observed.

Now, that state of experiencing, in which there is no observer and no observed, is the active present. So the question, then, is this: knowing that one's mind is caught in habit, how is one to bring about that state of awareness in which there is no observer? I do not know if I am making the problem clear. Let us approach it differently.

Where there is the observer and the observed, inevitably there is contradiction and conflict, is there not? When I observe somebody who is rich, and I want to be as rich, as comfortable, as free as he is, there is in me a conflict, a contradiction, an effort to be like that.

So where there is the observer and the observed, there is a contradiction, a conflict, an effort to be or to become, which places a limitation on consciousness.

Sirs, this may sound rather difficult, but it is not. What is difficult is the word, the phrase; but the actual feeling, the actual experiencing of it, is entirely different.

Take knowledge, for instance. All knowledge is in the past. What the engineer or the scientist has learnt is in the past, put away in his mind. What you have learnt is always in the past, which you use in the present towards a future. Now, if you observe, you will see there is a movement of knowing, which is different from knowledge. When you are in that movement, there is neither the observer nor the observed; there is only the movement of knowing. So, *self-knowing* is more important than self-knowledge. What you have stored up as knowledge about yourself, becomes a habit which prevents you from knowing the self as it actually is from moment to moment.

Look, sirs: I want to know myself; and the 'myself' is a most extraordinary thing, if you observe it. It is never still; it is always seeking, wanting, denying, accumulating, accepting; it takes so many different forms of desire; it has so many thoughts, so many pursuits, so many frustrations, fears, hopes. The whole of that is the self, the 'me'—the 'me' that establishes a goal, the 'me' that hopes or is in despair, the 'me' that lusts after something, the 'me' that loves, that feels sexual. It is a living thing, it is not static. And when the mind that is static with knowledge approaches this living thing, either it says, "I must not be like that", and tries to change it; or it says, "Yes, that is me, but what can I do about it?" This denial or acceptance, which is based on knowledge, becomes a habit. Whereas, the movement of knowing, which is the active present, is a process of discovery, of learning about oneself from

moment to moment. Do you see the difference, sirs?

You say, "I know my wife"; but do you? What you mean is that you have an image of her based on certain ideas, on what you have learnt, observed. So what has happened? You have established this knowledge as a habit, and you say, "I know my wife". Do examine it, sirs. Can you ever say that you know a living human being, who, like yourself, is constantly undergoing a change, who is full of anxieties, fears, apprehensions, uncertainties? You can say that you know how to run a Diesel engine, or what a piston is, or how the jets work, because they are all mechanical. But you reduce all your relationships—with human beings, with nature, with ideas—to mechanical habits, because you find it very convenient to live in that state; you are far less likely to be disturbed. You say, "I know my wife"—and relegate her to the category of mechanical things. In the same way, when you say, "I know myself", it means that you have knowledge about yourself which has become a pattern or habit of thought. Whereas, if you really see the significance of the word 'knowing', which implies the active present in which the past and the future are included, then there will never be either condemnation or mere acceptance of what is.

You see, I am trying to convey to you something which you have never thought about, and that is where our difficulty lies. Communication is always difficult, but more so when one is trying to say something to which very few have given any thought. Surely, you are learning something, are you not? In the very act of listening, you are learning. It is not a matter of collecting words, thinking about them later, and drawing a lesson from that in order to learn. Learning is an active process. As you are listening, you are learning; you are not accumulating knowledge.

Sirs, to learn about love, in the sense of understanding the meaning, the whole

significance of it, you cannot approach it by saying, "I have had the experience of love, and I know what it is"; because love is never still. The mind tries to make love into a habit, to reduce it to a memory—and thereby destroys it. You cannot acquire knowledge about love. It is a living thing, and you can only be in it, learn about it every second, and therefore there is never a point at which you can say, "I know what love is". Such love is dead. Memories and recollections of love are ashes, they have no meaning at all.

In the same way, the mind can be in the movement of knowing about itself. In that movement there is no entity as the observer, the censor, and hence no contradiction, no effort to be or to become; therefore there is a living understanding of the mind as it is. There is no *Atman*, no censor who chooses, no approximation to a pattern, which creates authority. Do you understand, sirs? At one stroke you remove all that nonsense; therefore you free the mind from effort, from conflict. There is choiceless awareness. The mind is in a state of knowing, learning, being, which is the active present.

You see, sirs, our difficulty is that very few of you have really gone into this. Probably you are feeling sentimental and are being mesmerized by my words. But all this requires very precise thinking; it requires a certain clarity, great simplicity; and you can have that clarity, that simplicity, with its extraordinary vitality, only when you begin to understand that there is only a movement of knowing. All fixed knowledge about oneself is purely mechanical habit, which creates the censor, and therefore there is contradiction, conflict. Whereas, in the movement of knowing, the mind goes within itself, but not in terms of time; and this timeless movement brings about a quietness, a sense of peace. It is not the peace of imagination, nor the tranquillity of an intellectual mind that has built an ivory tower for itself, nor the quietude of a

devotee who has handed himself over to some image, belief, or ideal. All such 'peace' is dead, it is a form of stagnation. But if you begin to understand this living thing called the self, which is merely a centralized collection of various influences, then in that movement of knowing, which is the active present, you will find that the mind, being free of the censor, is also free of contradiction and conflict. To such a mind there comes a sense of total silence, complete peace; and it is only such a mind that is creative. Such a mind is not functioning merely from memory; it is completely empty of mechanical habit; and to such a mind there comes that which is truth, the immeasurable. Truth never comes to a mind that is caught in its own cleverness, nor to a mind that is disciplined, desiccated, burnt up; nor does it come to the saints, to the leaders, to the merely virtuous. Truth, reality, which is the flowering of goodness, that sense of love, comes only to a mind that has entered into the understanding of itself.

January 17, 1960

## I

### TALK IN BANARAS

It seems to me very important to think fundamentally and to feel deeply about the major problems of life. To think fundamentally is not to think theoretically or speculatively, but rather to free the mind from the circles that it has woven around itself, and also from the circles that the world—circumstances, tradition, so-called knowledge—has woven around it. But most of us think theoretically; we are satisfied with facile answers and explanations, lulled to sleep by quotations, by satisfactory words, and, however difficult our problems may be, we generally manage to slither through them rather contentedly and superficially.

So, to those who are listening seriously and not just passing the time of day because they have nothing else to do, I would like to suggest that we go together, if we can, into our various problems, into the many conflicts and contradictions which burden our lives. By 'going together' into our problems, I do not mean mere verbalization, or the offering of explanations, but rather to find out if we cannot actually experience what is being said by examining our own minds and our own lives, so that we come out of it with clarity, precision and understanding. Otherwise we are merely indulging in words. You will come to these talks and gather a few more explanations, collect a few more ideas, and then slip back into the traditional way of life, or into a comfortable, secure way of life which you have established for yourself.

That is why I would suggest that those who are really serious about these matters should not only listen to what is being said, but, in the very process of listening, should observe their own minds, explore their own ways of thinking, uncover their own habits and activities in daily life. Unless we are willing to do this, it seems to me that these talks will not be worth while at all. I have been here often, and some of you have heard me repeatedly, fortunately or unfortunately, for the last ten years; and most of us change very little. We are established in our positions and have gained prestige. We are growing old, and we shall soon be in the grave without having solved any of our problems.

So, may I suggest that while listening to these talks you do not accept or reject, which would be immature, but rather explore with me the problems that each one of us has. To explore is not merely to describe and be satisfied, but actually to uncover the conflicts, the confusions, the trivialities of our lives.

One can see, through reading the newspapers and being observant of the events that are going on in the world, that freedom is getting less and less; the

margin of freedom is narrowing down. Do you know what I mean? The mind has very little chance to be free, it is not able to think out, to feel out, to discover, because organized religions throughout the world, with their dogmatic beliefs, have crippled our thinking; superstitions and traditions have enclosed the mind, conditioned the mind. You are a Hindu, a Christian, a Moslem, or you belong to some other organized belief which has been imposed upon you from childhood, and you function within that circle of limitation, narrow or wide. When you say you are a Hindu, a Moslem, or what you will, please observe your own mind. Are you not merely repeating what has been told you? You do not know, you merely accept—and you accept because it is convenient. Socially, economically it gives you security to accept and live within that circle. So freedom is denied—not only to the Hindu, to the Christian, to the Moslem, but to all who are held within the enclosure of an organized religion.

And if you observe you will see that, whatever profession you belong to, is also enslaving you. How can a man be free who has spent forty years in a particular profession? Look what happens to a doctor. Having spent seven years or so in college, for the rest of his life he is a general practitioner, or a specialist, and he becomes enslaved by the profession. Surely, his margin of freedom is very narrow. And the same is true of the politicians, of the social reformers, of the people who have ideals, who have an objective in life.

So, if you are observant you will see that everywhere in the world the margin of freedom and human dignity is getting less and less. Our minds are mere machines. We learn a profession, and forever after we are its slaves. And it seems to me that it requires a great deal of understanding, real perception, insight, to break this circle which the mind and society have woven around each one of us. To approach these enslavements anew, to tackle them

fundamentally, deeply, radically, I think one has to be revolutionary—which means thinking, feeling totally, and not just looking at things from the outside. And one must have a sense of humility, must one not?

I do not think humility is a cultivated virtue. Cultivated virtue is a horror, because the moment you cultivate a virtue, it ceases to be a virtue. Virtue is spontaneous, timeless, it is ever active in the present. A mind that merely cultivates humility can never know the fullness, the depth, the beauty of being really humble; and if the mind is not in that state, I do not think it can learn. It can function mechanically; but learning, surely, is not the mechanical accumulation of knowledge. The movement of learning is something entirely different, is it not? And to learn, the mind must have a sense of great humility.

I want to know what freedom is—not speculative freedom, which is self-projected as a reaction to something. Is there such a thing as real freedom—a state in which the mind is actually freeing itself from all the traditions and patterns which have been imposed upon it for centuries? I want to know what is this extraordinary thing after which people have struggled through the ages; I want to find out, learn all about it. And how can I do that if I have no sense of humility? Humility has nothing whatsoever to do with the self-protective humbleness which the mind imposes upon itself. That is an ugly thing. Humility cannot be cultivated; and it is one of the most difficult things to experience, surely, because we have already established ourselves in certain positions. We have certain ideas, values, we have a certain amount of experience, knowledge, and this background dictates our activities, our thoughts. An old man who has accumulated knowledge through his own experiences and through the experiences of others, and who is driven by his urge to be important, to establish for himself a position of power, prestige—how can

such a man be in a state of humility and thereby learn about his own trivialities? So it seems to me that we have to be tremendously attentive, and deeply aware of this sense of humility.

The world is in an extraordinary confusion, is it not? Look at your leaders, swamis, *gurus*, friends—they are all in a state of self-contradiction; they do not know what to do. Some of us have had minor explosions within ourselves, and have responded accordingly. When, for example, we see poverty, starvation, all the social misery that is going on around us, there is a minor explosion within ourselves. We want to act, to do something, not sit around and everlastingly talk, speculate; so the minor explosion brings the minor response. We join a movement of some kind and work, work, work. But that does not satisfy, it has no depth, it does not include the vast expanse of life, so we throw it aside and look to something else; again we join a movement, an organization. And so we go on throughout our life, joining, discarding, having minor explosions and responding with equal triviality.

Sirs, may I suggest that you listen to what is being said, not as a mere lecture, but as a description of yourself, and of your own existence; for if we are not aware of our own lives, if we are not vitally conscious of what is actually taking place within and around us, these talks become empty, utterly futile. So, please relate what is being said to your own life, and do not merely throw it aside as something very nice in theory, but not practical. After all, it is practical to think very clearly, and not to deceive oneself. To know what the problems are, and to find out how you respond to them, is extraordinarily important, is it not? Otherwise you merely wend your way through life, or create still greater confusion because you happen to get more votes and hold an important position. The mind is anyhow lethargic, very slow, sluggish; it needs a great shaking up, because it has

settled down in a comfortable, secure position and does not want to be disturbed. That is the case with most of us. And from that isolated position of security, the mind moves, acts and thinks. And life demands, surely, not only at the present time but always, a totally different response.

So it seems to me that to learn, humility is essential. Life is impressing certain things on the mind, and if we are at all aware, we are learning all the time. But most of us learn merely as a process of accumulation. I do not know if you have ever thought about learning—what it means to learn. I am not talking about schoolboy learning, which is merely the cultivation of memory, an additive process of gathering information. That kind of learning is mechanical, and it is a necessary part of existence; but I am talking about learning in an entirely different sense. Surely, the mind cannot learn if it has already accumulated. From that background of accumulation, it cannot look at anything anew, can it?

I wonder if you have ever noticed what happens in your mind when you look at a sunset, or the river? You have knowledge about the river, you know its name, its so-called spiritual significance; and this knowledge prevents you from really looking at the river. Sirs, am I talking of something foreign to all of you? I do not feel you are moving with me.

There are many problems in life; and how do you look at them? How do you look at the problem of power? How do you regard the tyranny of a few people over the majority? How do you look at the power of a very learned mind, and the power of the word to sway the multitude? What is your reaction to the *Gita*, to the *Vedas*, to all the spiritual books? If your reactions are merely trivial, if they are the traditional reactions which you have picked up from your environment, surely you cannot learn.

To me, learning is a constant, timeless movement, it is never cumulative. The mind that has accumulated knowledge has ceased to learn, though it may go on adding to its knowledge. Surely, learning is something entirely different from the acquisition of knowledge, because learning can never be an additive process.

I am so sorry, but I do not feel that you understand this at all. I have no communion with you. It is too bad.

Sirs, the mind—your mind—is the result of time, is it not? It is the cumulative outcome of many centuries, of many yesterdays. Now, that mind wants to learn, it wants to understand something. But can it understand anything with all this accumulation? It can interpret what it sees, saying it is good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant, worth while or not worth while; but a mind that wants to learn, to understand something, must surely be free from the past.

So, if the mind is to learn, to understand what freedom is, it must begin by perceiving to what an extent, to what depth it is a slave. One cannot merely say, "My mind is a slave", and regard freedom as a goal that one must seek. A slavish mind cannot seek freedom, because it does not know what freedom means. Whatever it seeks, it will still be slavish. But if the mind begins to learn to what extent it is a slave, if it is constantly observing the actual fact of its own enslavement, then it also begins to see where freedom lies. But most of us are not concerned with learning about ourselves. We are concerned with superficial activities, with escaping from ourselves through temples, through knowledge, through books, through social work, and all the rest of it.

I am concerned, as everyone in the world must be, with what is freedom; because freedom is getting less and less. Governments, even the democratic governments, do not give you freedom; they only talk about it. We can sit here and criticize the government, but this is freedom only in a very limited

sense. Under the tyrannical governments, there is no freedom at all; they do not allow people to talk with each other like this. So the margin of freedom is getting more and more narrow, which means that human dignity is wearing very thin. Please do see the importance of this. It is only in freedom that you can be creative; and to find out what freedom is, to learn about it, you must first know to what extent your mind is slavish. And being aware of its slavishness, can the mind break through it?

Look, sirs, we are all aware of tradition—the tradition of the family, of the group, of the nation. How much is your mind made up of that tradition? To what extent is your mind a slave to it? You must find out, surely. And to find out, you cannot say that tradition is right or wrong, good or bad; you cannot ask what to do about tradition, whether the mind can function without tradition, or bring up any of the superficial questions that one puts in superficially examining something.

I really want to know to what extent my mind is a slave to tradition—the tradition of centuries, and also the tradition of yesterday which I have created for myself. Tradition is habit. To what extent is my mind a slave to habit? And is it possible to free the mind from habit? This is not a superficial question: it is the fundamental question. Until I know how to answer it—and I can answer it only by learning about myself—my inquiry into social problems, my discussion of economic and religious problems, will always be very superficial, because I shall merely respond according to the tradition which society has imposed upon me. Most of us are satisfied with this kind of superficial thinking, and that is why it is very difficult for us to be serious in examining ourselves, to learn about ourselves and find out to what extent we are slaves. And to learn about ourselves, humility is necessary, is it not?

I do not know if you have ever felt the strange quality of humility. Humility implies love, does it not? It implies a chastened approach to problems. Humility implies an absence of all conclusions, all goals which the mind has projected.

Look, sirs, we, the older generation, always talk about the new generation transforming the world. But those very people who talk so hopefully about the new generation, impose their patterned way of thinking on the younger people. They really do not want a new generation; they want the perpetuation of their own exact pattern of existence. And if the mind is to learn, surely humility is essential, is it not? I am labouring this point, because most of us are conceited, we think we know. Actually, what is it that we know? Have you ever looked at the process called 'knowing'? Have you ever inquired into this question of 'I know'? What you know is what you have gathered, it depends on what your experiences have been, and those experiences are part of your conditioning. Do you understand, sirs? If you are a rich man, your experiences are shaped according to the pattern of your riches. If you are a poor man, your experiences are limited to the state of your poverty. If you are a scholarly person, your experiences are largely determined by the books you read. If you have been a bureaucrat for forty years, it is obvious that your experiences are mostly confined to that field; yet you say, "I know", and from that conceit you want to shape the course of other lives. That is what we all do. The politician, the so-called religious person, the scholar, the professor, the husband, the wife—everybody does this. It is a curse.

So, what is the problem for those who are really serious? The people who are pursuing some goal, who are lost in some activity, or in getting what they want, are not serious at all. That is only vanity. A serious man is one who wants to find out, to discover for himself, and not repeat what umpteen people

have said. And surely such a man, being really serious, must explore all these things.

Take, for example, the whole question of non-violence. In this country we talk a great deal about non-violence, and we have made a philosophy of it. To me it is all rubbish, if you will forgive my saying so. The fact is that we are violent. Being violent, we make an ideal of non-violence, and thereby establish a contradiction within ourselves; and with that contradictory mind we invent a philosophy—which is so utterly silly. What matters, surely, is to see that I am violent, and begin to understand this whole problem of violence—not try to be non-violent. I do not know what it means to be non-violent. How can I know what it means? I can only speculate about it, which is worthless. What I can do is to learn about violence in myself, watch it, see all its implications, its significance, its neurotic, contradictory states; and thus to learn about violence in myself requires a great deal of humility. But a mind which seeks to be non-violent, is a conceited, speculative mind; it is escaping from violence, and thereby creating a contradiction within itself; and a self-contradictory mind can never understand and be free of violence. However much it may discipline itself to be non-violent, it will always be in a state of contradiction; and a self-contradictory mind is a violent, destructive mind. Please do see this simple fact.

The difficulty with most of us is that we refuse to see the fact that we are violent, because we are committed to the ideal of 'non-violence', whatever that may mean. But if I see that I am violent, and I want to understand my violence, go into it totally, with my whole being, then I must abandon the contradiction, I must see the falseness of the ideal of non-violence. What is the good of my talking about non-violence when my whole being is violent, though I may cover it up? So I have to perceive my violence, I have to go into

it, understand it; and to do that, my mind must obviously be in a state of humility. Do you understand, sirs?

So it seems to me that we must think out all these problems rather fundamentally. The important thing is not to find an answer that is immediately satisfactory, or for the moment applicable, but rather to have an overall feeling about all these problems.

I am afraid I am not at all communicating to you what I want to convey. It may be my fault; it may be the cold morning, or perhaps one did not sleep properly, or has over-eaten.

You see, most of us do not want to be disturbed. Have you ever noticed a man in a good position, who gets exceptional benefits out of his job? He does not want to be disturbed, he will not let go, he will not allow others to have a chance at it. The same situation is endlessly repeated throughout the world, and it is the same in different ways with each one of us. We need a shaking that will loosen us; and ultimately, of course, there is death. Is this a problem to you, sirs? The mind is always seeking security, a haven in which it will never be disturbed, and therefore it becomes a slave to a particular pattern of living, thinking, feeling. How can such a mind be broken loose from its moorings? How can such a mind learn?

Our problem is, first of all, to know ourselves—which is not a mere idealistic pursuit, because it is only in knowing ourselves that we can know what action is. Knowing ourselves is the basis of real action—action which is worthy, significant. Most of us do not want to know ourselves, it is too much of a bore, an exercise; we would rather be told what to do. But to uncover the ways of our own thinking, to see the motives which lie behind our activities, is surely one of the fundamental issues, is it not? If we know how to uncover ourselves, we shall break the pattern of slavery, and we shall then know what freedom is—which is of the utmost

importance, because the margin of freedom is everywhere becoming very narrow. The more progress we make in the world of things and in the world of ideas, the less freedom there is. In America, where there is prosperity such as the world has never known, people are becoming slaves to prosperity. That is one of the major issues there now. Here there is poverty, and we want prosperity. We want more food, more clothes, more things; and we are becoming slaves to the very idea that we must be prosperous.

So do please examine yourself to find out to what extent, to what depth your mind is enslaved. It may not be enslaved to the routine of an office, it may not be caught in the mechanical slavery to things; but it may be that you are a slave to knowledge. And without seeing all this, without really inquiring into it, without uncovering and discovering it for yourself, I do not see how you can live in freedom.

You know, there are many people for whom life is a despair. Having worked all their lives trying to bring about social reforms, or what you will, suddenly there is an end, and they are frustrated; all the established philosophies, religions, ideals have come to an end, and they are in despair. I wonder if any of you know that state at all? But people who are very clever, when they face that despair, invent a philosophy of their own, which is what is happening in the world at the present time; they say, "Accept life as it is, and make the best of it".

Now, when you have examined all the avenues of escape, the clever theories, the quotations from the *Gita* and all the rest of it, and when your mind refuses to be tricked by any explanation or facile adjustment, so that you have no answer, then you must surely come to a state of despair which is not the opposite of hope. Most of us hope for something, big or small—for a better job or to find a way out of a difficult problem—and when our hopes are not fulfilled, we are in a

state of despair, which is merely a reaction from hope, because we are still wanting something. I do not mean that kind of despair, which is really quite immature. I am talking of a mind that has examined all these things, and has not found an answer. Such a mind is not a hopeful mind, it is not seeking or wanting to find a final answer. It is in a state of complete not-knowing, complete despair, and there is no way out. Surely, only then one finds that which is truth.

Truth, or God, or what you will—the thing we all talk about so easily—is not so easy to come by. One has to work very hard—but not through disciplines and practices, which are all meaningless, because they contain the seed of hope and despair. To uncover and see what one is actually thinking, and why one is thinking it; to perceive the influences of tradition, the motives, the habitual patterns of thought—all this is very hard work. One has to be attentive all the time. If, being sluggish, the mind is inattentive, it may discipline itself to be attentive; but that only makes the mind still more sluggish. A disciplined mind is essentially a sluggish mind. If you think about this, you will see how true it is. An alert, active mind, a mind that looks into, examines everything, needs no discipline. Discipline is in the very process of examination, the process of understanding.

Sirs, I think it is very important that all that is said be applied to oneself. If you are capable of really examining yourself, going very deeply within yourself, then you will find there is a freedom which is not the opposite of slavery; and in the light of this freedom, all the problems of your life have a different meaning altogether. It seems to me that the only important thing in life is to find this freedom; because in this freedom there is creativity, there is that reality which human beings are everlastingly seeking.

January 24, 1960

## II

## TALK IN BANARAS

Perhaps this morning, after I have talked a little, it might be worth while to discuss what I have talked about. By discussion I mean that you and I should think the problem out together, that we should inquire, not only verbally, but see how far our minds can penetrate into the problem. To discuss in that way might be more worth while than merely to listen—though listening is an extraordinary thing in itself. But very few of us listen. We are surrounded by our own words, by our own explanations, by our own experiences, and we scarcely if ever listen to another to find out what he really thinks. After I have talked a little, perhaps we could go into this question more intimately and deeply through exchanging thoughts and verbally clearing the field, as it were.

What I want to talk about this morning is a problem which I think confronts not only those of us who are here, but also the rest of the world. We are all concerned with the problem of working together, co-operation, getting things done together. This problem of working together has been approached in various ways, has it not?—coercively, compulsively and persuasively. Working together has become important, not only in society, in commercial production, but also ideologically—which I am not sure is working together at all. The whole question of working together has many implications, and everyone who is concerned with a radical change in society, is also concerned, surely, with this question. We generally work together through fear of punishment, or through hope of reward, or through the desire to gain position, prestige, power, do we not?

Please, may I suggest that we do not merely listen to the words, but actually apply to ourselves what is being said.

We sometimes work together because we are influenced intellectually, emo-

tionally, by a cunning person, or by one who has assumed spiritual authority as a saint, as a *guru*, and so on. That is one way of bringing about our so-called working together. Another is the political way. A certain piece of work has to be done, a party is formed opposing another party with a different plan, and there is a campaign for the getting of votes. In that is implied a great deal of cunning, scheming, chicanery, an enormous amount of propaganda and persuasion.

We are considering the problem, so please follow this a little bit closely.

Then there is the working together for an idea, for a belief, which may be social or so-called spiritual. An idea is put forward by someone, and we co-operate with that person because we think the idea is excellent, worth while, or significant. That is also called working together. So we work together for an idea, through persuasion, through compulsion, through fear of punishment or hope of reward, and that is all we know. That is how we come together to do something. You may say that our working together is not so brutal and superficial, that we work together for love of the country, love of an idea, love of the poor. Surely, when there is love, there is no sense of compulsion or persuasion, is there? There is no vote-getting, no forming of parties, no sense of the mine and the yours.

To work together for something which is not a self-projected idea, which is not profitable for oneself, for one's family or relations, and so on—such working together has quite a different significance. But before we can find out what it is to work together in that way, surely we must eliminate in ourselves the various forms of compulsion.

Am I capable of working with others in an endeavour which is not based on authority, either mine, or yours, or his, and in which there is no personal profit, however subtle? A true working together comes about, surely, only when you and I both understand the

problem, really understand it; for it is this very understanding that creates the necessity of working together. Our co-operation is then not self-imposed, it is not the outcome of so-called tolerance, or of any form of persuasion. The moment you and I both see that a certain form of education must be brought about, there is no 'you' and no 'I': what is important is the new education. When you and I both see that starvation must be rooted out, when we see the absolute necessity of it, not merely intellectually, but when we feel it deeply, totally, with a great deal of affection, sympathy, love, then in that state of understanding, surely, you and I work together to eliminate starvation. But if you have a pet system by which to wipe out starvation, and I have another, then the system becomes all-important; so you gather votes, and I gather votes, and we fight each other, dissipating our creative thought and energy in an endless struggle to bring about a system that will solve the problem.

Do please examine this. Though it is not possible to go into many details, one can see that working together implies a great deal. There can be a true working together in every department of life—political, social, economic, religious, educational—only when we free our minds from every form of fear, from every form of influence and reward; and for most of us this is a very difficult thing to do, because we want something at the end of it. We want a position, a certain prestige, or we think, "This is the right thing to do", and we work, sweat for it, gathering votes and pushing others aside; so there is contention, conflict. And to me, every form of conflict, at whatever level of our existence, is a most destructive, deteriorating factor in life.

So, it seems to me that the solution to this problem of working together lies in bringing about a radical change in ourselves—a change which is not the result of any form of influence. Sirs, we do change through persuasion, do we not?

It may be the Communist form of persuasion, or the Socialist form of persuasion, or the Democratic form of persuasion, or the persuasion of the mother saying, "Do this for me"; whichever it is, we do change a little. I wonder if you have ever looked at your own lives to see whether you have changed at all? If you have changed, how has this change in your life been brought about? Has it been through persuasion, through compulsion, through a motive in some form? Or has the change come about without any motive? Surely, a change brought about through a motive, is really no change at all, is it?

Look, sir, revolution is obviously necessary: revolution in the school, in society, in religion. Things must be broken up, however uncomfortable it may be; they cannot go on as they are. Where a few privileged people rule; where tradition, dogmatism and stupidity reign; where the few have educational and other advantages which the many have not; where there is immense poverty, starvation, degradation, and at the same time extraordinary prosperity, things cannot remain as they are. Something must break—and it is breaking, however much you may like your present mode of existence and want it to continue. So, revolution—economic, social, religious—there must be. But unfortunately, most people resist it. The bank clerk, the family man who has a house, a little property, the man in a position of power—everybody resists change, in little things and in big things. Have you not noticed this in your own lives? When you have to eat a different kind of food, something which is not the highly-spiced food you are used to, your body rebels. That also is a form of the desire not to change.

Please search your own minds, not my speech. Don't merely listen to a talk. It is a clear morning; there is the lovely river, the beautiful sky. It is much better to look at all those things than be crowded in this room with people who have no intention of examining them-

selves. It is much better to enjoy life, to feel the richness of the earth, to be aware of poverty, to see the river flowing by, than to sit here and speculate. Speculation is the most stupid form of intellectual amusement.

As I was saying, we always resist change; but change is going to take place, whether we like it or not. Those who rule and resist will be broken the moment the thing they have built up begins to crack; whereas the wise man knows that change is inevitable, and yields in himself when revolution is shattering the things he has been building. But such people are few.

So the problem is how to bring about a radical change in ourselves—which is so obviously necessary—without persuasion. If you are persuaded to change, you are merely reacting to a certain form of compulsion, whether it is the Indian form, or the Communist form, or the Western form; and to change through any form of compulsion, is no change at all. If you change because you are offered a reward, or because you are threatened, no real change has taken place. You have merely conformed to another pattern. Revolution which is a reaction to what has been, is not a revolution, because it merely establishes a new pattern, which is a modified form of the old; that is all. Am I talking too fast?

One sees that, if there is to be a real change in the world, there must first be a radical transformation in the quality of the mind itself; because people change very easily from the totalitarian to the democratic state, or from democracy to totalitarianism, whether it be the Nazi kind or the Communist kind. Give them more food, offer them better opportunities for earning a livelihood, excite them in the stupidities of nationalism, and they will all 'change', one way or the other. But one sees that any such change is only a reaction, and a mind that merely reacts can again be influenced to change in another direction: today I am a Communist, and if that does not pay, I

become a Socialist, or a Capitalist, and so on. Seeing this process going on throughout the world, one asks oneself what it all means. Where is the change to take place? Is change merely a matter of dropping one pattern and conforming to another? Do you see the problem, sirs?

What is implied in the word 'change'? Being greedy, I want to change the moment greed is painful; but I don't want to change as long as I find a great deal of pleasure in greed. So when I try to get rid of greed, I am changing with a motive; my desire to change is a reaction, and that reaction can again be modified. I do not know if you are following all this.

Can there be a change, a total revolution—not an economic revolution, or a social revolution, or a religious revolution, which are all superficial, but an inward revolution which is total, in which my whole consciousness, my whole being is shattered, and a new thing comes up? You see, sirs, change for most of us is a modified continuity of the past, and that is no change at all. Seeing this difficulty, and realizing how complex is this whole process of revolution, change, one inevitably asks: is it possible to change at all within the field of consciousness?

Is this all too difficult, sirs?

*Questioner: May I speak?*

KRISHNAMURTI: Just a moment. I have not yet finished what I want to say. First see the problem, Sir. If one really goes into it, one sees it to be a problem of *thought* versus *being*. For most of us, thought is a means to change. Through thought we hope to change, through ideas we hope to transform ourselves. I persuade you, through ideas, to drop your nationalism, to take up a particular form of religious practice, or what you will. I manage to persuade you because I am very clever; I show you the absurdity of this or that, and you are persuaded

by my intensity, by my words, and you change—or at least you think you have changed.

Now, what has actually taken place in that process? You have changed your ideas, you have changed your thought; but thought is always conditioned. Whether it is the thought of Jesus, Buddha, X, Y, or Z, it is still thought, and therefore one thought can be in opposition to another thought; and when there is opposition, a conflict between two thoughts, the result is a modified continuity of thought. In other words, the change is still within the field of thought; and change within the field of thought is no change at all. One idea or set of ideas has merely been substituted for another.

Seeing this whole process, is it possible to leave thought and bring about a change outside the field of thought? All consciousness, surely, whether it is of the past, the present, or the future, is within the field of thought; and any change within that field, which sets the boundaries of the mind, is no real change. A radical change can take place only outside the field of thought, not within it; and the mind can leave the field only when it sees the confines, the boundaries of the field, and realizes that any change within the field is no change at all. This is real meditation. To go into it requires a great deal of work, thought, energy—the energy which we now dissipate on practices of various kinds, which are all so childish. Really to investigate the field of thought, and to see the limitations of consciousness, is of the utmost importance. After all, these limitations are the result of effort, of contradictions, of conflicts and the desire to change. It is seeing this limited field totally, understanding it completely, that the radical change of which I am talking comes about—not through any form of persuasion, compulsion, or authoritative influence; and I think this is the only way to function, to live and work together.

Yes, sir?

*Questioner: I feel that the changes you are talking about—social, economic and political—are all the expressions of one unifying principle.*

KRISHNAMURTI: That is a theory.

*Questioner: I feel there is a unifying principle working in the world, in the whole of creation.*

KRISHNAMURTI: It may be. I don't know.

*Questioner: Changes will come, and nobody can resist them.*

KRISHNAMURTI: Are we not resisting changes, each one of us? To see that, is what matters. If we were not resisting change, we would not talk about a unifying principle. Then life would be a constant revolution.

*Questioner: The unifying principle rests on the revolution.*

KRISHNAMURTI: Why bring the term 'unifying principle' into this problem at all?

*Questioner: If changes are inevitable, what makes us resist them?*

KRISHNAMURTI: That is very simple to answer. The man who has a good position—politically, economically, in the school, or anywhere else—resists changes. He says, "For God's sake, keep things as they are". The people in authority resist any change, because they do not want to be disturbed. Right through life it is the same, from the prime minister to the small-town politician. The man who is discontented with things as they are—it is he who wants to find out about change. Being disturbed, dissatisfied in himself, he accepts a particular form of

change which satisfies him; and once established in that habit, he also does not want to be disturbed.

*Questioner: Dissatisfied people can very easily be caught in any kind of change which is made to appear the opposite of what they dislike.*

KRISHNAMURTI: Yes, sir, that is what we were saying.

*Questioner: You say that real change must be outside the field of thought. But must we not first know all the possible facts that can be collected by the mind about something, and then let that information influence us until our feelings tell us that it is right?*

KRISHNAMURTI: I don't quite see how it can work that way. You are saying that through analysis and deduction one must collect information, see the importance of this collected information, transform it into feeling, and then act from that feeling. That is what most of us do, consciously or unconsciously. I say that a certain political or religious way of living is right. How do I know? Because I have read about it, people and my own experience have persuaded me, and I feel it is worth while, that it will improve the lot of man; so I commit myself to the party, and I am against other parties. That is what most of us do all the time. Now, in engendering that feeling, surely what is implied is a sense of judgment based on experience, is it not? And experience is obviously conditioned. My experience as a Communist, as a Democrat, or what you will, is the outcome of various influences, persuasions, compulsions, fears, rewards. From that conditioning there is feeling, and I act.

*Questioner: I think feeling is more or less unconscious. We should use our conscious thoughts to influence our unconscious feeling, which is the unconscious mind.*

KRISHNAMURTI: Is there a real division between the conscious and the unconscious, or is it an unnatural division created by our social, environmental influences? The conscious mind is the mind that has learnt, that has acquired knowledge; it is a superficial collector of information. It goes to the office every day, does certain routine things, and so on. Then there is the unconscious; and can the conscious mind influence the unconscious? If you really examine it, you will see that it is the unconscious that is influencing the conscious mind, fortunately or unfortunately; there is an interplay between the two all the time. But to discuss this question of the conscious and the unconscious requires a great deal of penetration and time. We would have to start right at the beginning, not at the end of the hour. Perhaps we can do it another time.

*Questioner: How is one to bring about a change outside the field of consciousness?*

*Questioner: That is possible only when we can forget the division between you and me.*

KRISHNAMURTI: I do not think you have listened at all. A gentleman asks how to change outside the field of consciousness. He wants to know what the method is, how to do it. You know, it is one of the odd things about us that we are so slavish to methods—as though any method is going to solve our human problems. Sir, there is a method for putting something together. If I want to be a mechanic, I learn how to deal with mechanical things. That is very simple. I go to school and they teach me the method. But we are not talking of mechanical things, and therefore there is no method. You have to think it out. Sir, do look at it this way, if I may suggest: Is there a method by which to love people?

*Questioner: No.*

KRISHNAMURTI: Why do you say no to that question, and yet ask for a method to change?

*Questioner: Isn't it true that we think of change as something tangible, something that can be felt, experienced?*

KRISHNAMURTI: Think it out, sir, don't ask me. The problem is so vast. You cannot say, "Tell me what is the method to change", it has no meaning. If you are concerned about change, not just theoretically so that you go back home and continue in the old way, but if you see the necessity of it and realize that you have got to change, then this problem arises: the problem of persuasion, influence, punishment, reward, and your own reactions of which you are not aware; so it is meaningless to get up and say, "Please tell me in a few minutes all about change outside the field of consciousness".

What is a man to do who is really interested in this question?—and human beings must be vitally interested in it, because it is the problem throughout the world. It is the problem, not just of this school, or of the man round the corner, but of humanity itself. Can a change be brought about in the quality of the mind, which is now becoming so mechanical, slavish? If this is a vital problem to you and me, we won't casually ask for a method; we will discuss factually, not theoretically. I feel all theoretical discussion is valueless, hot air, a waste of time. We will discuss factually if we really see the necessity of a fundamental change. I see that I am greedy, and I want to know if it is possible to be free of greed; I see that I am envious, and I want to find out if I can break that envy. I am not looking for a method, but I say, "Let me examine the problem of envy". If a man who is in a position of power says, "Look, I am a great man; I like being in this position, and don't disturb me", then for him there is no problem. I go away from such

a man; I don't play up to him, because I want nothing from him. But as ordinary human beings, you and I are concerned with this problem. It is not my problem, which I am thrusting on you; it is your problem. If you sit there and say, "Tell me all about it", then you and I have no relationship. But if a few of us can think it over together, then that is a totally different thing.

*Questioner: There is a staircase, and we reach the roof by its means. We do not know what type of roof it is until we get there. Can we say that the roof is something external to the staircase? Will there be a roof if there is no staircase?*

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, the house is the floor, the walls, the windows, the roof and the staircase. You cannot separate the staircase or the roof from the house. There is no such thing as a roof hanging without the walls. The house is a total thing. Now, any change within the house—going from one room to another, decorating each room in a different way, and so on—is a limited change; it is conditioned, narrow. It is obviously not freedom. So, can there be a total change, a change which is not within the house? Do you say that such a change is impossible, that any change is always within the house? Do you say it is nonsense to talk about a change outside the house? What is it that you think? Is all change within the house, or is it possible to bring about a change outside—or rather, not a change, but a way of action? After all, change means action—a way of action which is not confined to the house.

Look, sir: let us say I am a Hindu, and I see how stupid, squalid, ugly it all is, so I join Catholicism. That is an action, is it not? And I think I have changed. But my 'change' is still within the house, within the cage, it is still within the field of human misery. I have only exchanged one state of

slavery for another. Seeing this fact, I say, "Is it possible to act without this limitation, without this house, without Hinduism, Catholicism, or any other system? Vast numbers of people, including the Catholics and the Communists, say it is not possible. That may be so; but then you have to admit that the mind is everlastingly a slave.

*Questioner:* "You say the change from Hinduism to Catholicism is no change. But when we climb the staircase, we are at a different level.

KRISHNAMURTI: In other words, you are saying that through the gradual process of going step by step up the staircase, you reach the roof, where you have a different outlook on life. In saying this, you are inviting time, are you not? When you go step by step up the ladder till you reach the roof, that process, from the first step to the last, implies gradualness; the distance from one point to another must be traversed, which means time, does it not? All this is still within the field of thought, within the field of the mind.

*Questioner:* A man going up the stairs has not seen the roof, he does not know what the roof is like until the last step, and then it is a spontaneous thing.

KRISHNAMURTI: Similies are most misleading, and that is why one hesitates to use them. Let us not get lost in similies and examples. Don't try to find a way out: just see the problem. Though I am putting all this into words, be aware of the problem for yourself, sir. The problem is that we must change. You may say, "Don't disturb me, let things remain as they are"; but things will not remain as they are. Life is going to shatter that which has become crystallized. Whether it is life in the form of a soldier with a gun, or life as a man like me with the

word, something is going to shatter you. And when you are shattered by an outward event, through some form of compulsion or influence, is that a change? Is it a change if there is a motive of any kind? And is it possible to change without a motive? Don't say it is possible, or it is not possible. We are thinking it out. We are not coming to any conclusion. It is a terrible thing to come to a conclusion, because then you have stopped thinking. The problem is enormous, and one has to be very tentative about it; one has to inquire, to find out for oneself through watching, through constant awareness, if there is a change which is not induced, which is not the result of influence.

Sirs, another difficulty is that the mind likes to function in habit. Habit is the desire to be secure. If I am a so-called great man, used to having power, I like to function in that habit. The mind establishes various habits which give it a certain sense of security, and it resists any movement that disturbs those habits. When we do want to break a habit into which the mind has fallen, we say that we must have an ideal, that we must practise, that we must do this or do that; and I say, is that a change? Or is change something entirely different—something which awakens the extraordinary feeling of creation? Surely, that is the only real change. Creation is not the creative faculty of a cunning mind, nor is it the creativity of a mind that has a gift or a talent; it is the sense of complete release from the house of the self, and from acting within that house.

January 26, 1960

### III

#### TALK IN BANARAS

I would like, if I may this morning, to talk about what to do in life, which is what some people philosophically

call action. We have divided action from life, have we not? And I wonder if action can be divided from life? There is what we call social action, political action, reformatory action, the action of education, the action of a business man, the action of a swami, a yogi, a philosopher, and so on. There are these various forms of action, and the question of what to do, as if the thing that has to be done were apart from life. It is like digging a hole on the bank of the river, barricading oneself in that hole, and then saying, "How shall I flow with the river?" First we divide action from life, and then we try to find a way of bridging the gap between them. If you have observed, is this not what we are doing most of our lives? We have a pattern of action, whether it be the socialistic, religious, philosophic, educational or commercial, and most of us are satisfied with that particular pattern of action.

Take the reformer, for example. He has a certain pattern of action with which he is satisfied, for he thinks it will transform the world; so he works, pushes, sacrificing everything for the sake of that pattern, and he never breaks away from it.

That is the difficulty with most of us, is it not? We don't seem to be able to appreciate the whole of life. Do you know what I mean by that word 'appreciate'? To appreciate is to be sensitive to, to be aware or take cognizance of the whole of life; and if we can be aware, cognizant of the whole of life, then I think we can discuss more profitably what is action. Action is not separate from life, but stems or is born from this very sensitivity which is a deep appreciation of life as a whole. I do not know if I am making myself clear.

Let us suppose that you are an educational expert. You think you know all about education. You have put up a few buildings, and you function in a very limited educational field. You don't regard the whole of life, which

includes politics, religion, social reform, philosophy, sorrow, joy, love, anger, the appreciation of something beautiful; you leave all that alone. You concern yourself only with the narrow field which you call education, and you don't want anybody to touch it, to break it up, because it has given you a sense of security; you have a position, a certain prestige, and you don't want it disturbed. But like the river, life is flowing on all the time; it is battering at what you call education, and it won't leave you alone. So there is a conflict between the living, the moving, the dynamic, and that which is static. The static is that which you have carved out of your own thought, and which has become established as your professorial or bureaucratic status, or the status of the practical man, as he is called.

Then there are those who regard religio-social reform as of primary importance; and if you examine it objectively, clearly, without any personal bias, you will see that here too the mind establishes a pattern of activity, a way of life with a great many defences and taboos. It says, "I must do this and not that, I must get up at a certain hour, live in a certain way, work for the whole of mankind", and so on and so on. Do you understand? Just as there is supposed to be an American way of life, or an English way of life, so the religio-social reformer says, "This is the way of life for me". Life itself is so immense, so vast, so incredibly complicated and beautiful; yet he ignores all that. He may verbalize, philosophize about it, indulge in explanations, but he does not want anything to interfere with the pattern which he has established for himself. Yet that extraordinary thing called life comes and batters him, so there is a contradiction within and without, and sooner or later he is in misery. He does not know why, but he is miserable, frustrated, burdened with a constant sense of apprehension.

Or take the so-called religious man. He says, "I have nothing to do with the

world, I am seeking God", and he becomes a monk, or assumes the robe of renunciation. He observes certain ascetic practices; he remains a bachelor and denies, sacrifices, suppresses, desiccates, dehydrates himself. He too has set a pattern, a way of life for himself. In the extraordinary movement of life there is love, there is joy, there is the whole complex relationship of sex, there is the fellowship of man, there is music, there are sorrows, despairs, hopes and fears. But he denies life; he has cut himself off from the movement of life in a kind of graven cathedral of ideas. He is a Christian, a Buddhist, a Hindu, or what you will.

This process goes on all the time with most of us. If you have examined your own thinking, if you are aware of yourself at all, you will have noticed how you carve for yourself a niche, a shelter, a haven of ideas, of beliefs, of relationship, and then you don't want to be disturbed. Is this not the manner of our lives? There is this intense urge to take shelter in something—in nationalism, in a particular religion or philosophy, in a way of life—and we deny the extraordinary movement of life in which there is beauty, sensitivity, freedom, in which there is no beginning and no ending. It is a movement that has no form, in which there is no Christ, no Buddha, no X, Y, or Z. It is life itself, and it is battering at us all the time, pounding at the walls of our isolated existence.

So there is a contradiction in our lives, a self-contradiction of which we are consciously or unconsciously aware. There is a deep, inward sense of frustration; and from this contradiction, from this frustration, from this schizophrenic cleavage in our existence, we act. The battle is outward as well as inward. You are a socialist, and I am a so-called religious man; or you are an educational expert, and I concern myself only with business; or you are a politician, and I am the poor voter whom you can trick into almost anything; or you are an extraordinarily intellectual person, and

I am stupid; or you are the saint, and I am the sinner. You try to convince or convert me, but I don't want to be disturbed, so I say, "Leave me alone"; or, if it suits me because I see that I can get some advantage out of it spiritually, physically or politically, I say, "You are perfectly right, I will follow you."

So, from this contradiction within and without, our activity is born. I do not know if you have noticed people who are extraordinarily active, who are always doing something, always reforming, preaching, moralizing, telling others what they should do. If you have talked to such people, if you have observed them, lived with them, you will know in what a state of contradiction, in what inward misery they are. They don't know what it means to love; and I don't think you know. If you love, that is enough; you don't have to do anything else. If you love, do what you will, it is always good. Love is the only source of action in which there is no contradiction.

I know all this sounds pleasant, it is a nice thing to listen to on a lovely morning; but you don't know what that love is. You cannot know that love if you hold on to your particular pattern of existence and say, "I will carry this with me". To find the other, you have to shatter the pattern.

Sirs, I wonder if you have ever given any thought to the question of what is false and what is true? Any person can say without much thought, "This is false, that is true". But to inquire into, to be sensitive to and appreciate what is false and what is true, is extraordinarily difficult; because, to find out what is true, one has to see the false and for ever put it away, and not merely follow the pattern of what others have said to be true.

Please, sirs, do listen to me.

To find out what is true and not follow another who tells you what is true, or arbitrarily assert what is false and what is true, you must see that which is intrinsically false and put it away. In other words, one finds out what is true, surely,

only through negation. Say, for instance, you realize that you cannot have a quiet mind as long as there is greed; so you are concerned, not with quietness of the mind, but with greed. You investigate to see if greed can be put away completely—or avarice, or envy. There is a constant purgation of the mind, a constant process of negation.

Sirs, if I want to understand the whole of this extraordinary thing called life, which must be the totality of all religions; if I want to be sensitive to it, appreciate it, and I see that nationalism, provincialism, or any limited attitude, is most destructive to that understanding, what happens? Surely, I realize that I must put away nationalism, that I must cease to be a Hindu, or a Moslem, or a Christian. I must cease to have this insular, nationalistic attitude, and be free of the authority of organized religions, dogmas, beliefs. So, through negation, the mind begins to perceive what is true. But most of us find it very difficult to understand through negation, because we think it will lead us nowhere, give us nothing. We say it will create a state of vacuum—as though our minds were not in a state of vacuum now!

To understand this immensity, the timeless quality of life, surely you must approach it through negation. It is because you are committed to a particular course of action, to a certain pattern of existence, that you find it difficult to free yourself from all that and face a new way, a new approach. After all, death is the ultimate negation. It is only when one dies now, while living, which means the constant breaking up of all the habit-patterns, the various attitudes, conclusions, ideas, beliefs that one has—it is only then that one can find out what life is. But most of us say, "I cannot break up the pattern, it is impossible, therefore I must learn a way of breaking it; I must practise a certain system, a method of breaking it up"; so we become slaves to the new pattern which we establish through practice. We have not broken the pattern,

but have only substituted a new pattern for the old.

Sirs, you nod your heads, you say this is so true, logical, clear—and you go right on with the pattern, old or new. It seems to me that the real problem is the sluggishness of the mind. Any fairly intelligent mind can see that inwardly we want security, a haven, a refuge where we shall not be disturbed, and that this urge to be secure creates a pattern of life which becomes a habit. But to break up that pattern requires a great deal of energy, thought, inquiry, and the mind refuses, because it says, "If I break up my pattern of life, what will become of me? What will this school be if the old pattern is broken? It will be chaos"—as if it were not chaos now!

You see, we are always living in a state of contradiction, from which we act, and therefore we create still more contradiction, more misery. We have made living a process of action *versus* being. The man who is very clever, who convinces others through his gift of the gab or his way of life, who puts on a loin cloth and outwardly becomes a saint, may inwardly be acting from a state of contradiction; he may be a most disastrously torn entity, but because he has the outward paraphernalia of a saintly life, we all follow him blindly. Whereas, if we really go into and understand this problem of contradiction within and without, then I think we shall come upon an action which is not away from life. It is part of our daily existence. Such action does not spring from *idea*, but from *being*. It is the comprehension of the whole of life.

I wonder if you are ever in the position of asking yourself, "What am I going to do?" If you do put that question to yourself, do you not always respond according to a pattern of thought which you have already established? You never allow yourself to ask, "What shall I do?"—and stop there. You always say, "This must be done, that must not be done". It is only the intelligent mind, the awakened mind,

the mind that sees the significance of this whole process—surely, it is only such a mind that asks, “What shall I do, what course of action shall I take?”, without a ready-made answer. Having through negation come to that point, such a mind begins to comprehend, to be sensitive to the whole problem of existence.

I wonder, sirs, if we can discuss all this? It is very difficult to discuss in the sense of exposing oneself. We may intellectually, verbally exchange a few ideas. But it is quite another matter to really expose ourselves, to be aware of the fact that we have committed ourselves to something, to a particular course of action, to see the limitations of that pattern, and to find out by discussing, thinking it out together, how to break it up. Such a discussion would be highly worth while, and I hope we can do it.

*Questioner: Every human being must sometime or other have expressed an action which has not broken the unitive feeling for life. Out of deep feeling a man acts, without any sense that his action springs from a separate centre. But even in such a case, where there is the spontaneous, original feeling of action which enriches life, the very momentum of that action seems to create a separate centre.*

KRISHNAMURTI: A gentleman suggests that it may not be possible to act with one's whole being, without having that action again bring about a separate centre from which other actions take place. Do you understand the problem? That is, have you ever known an action which involved your whole being, intellectual, physical, emotional—an action in which there was no motive, no thought of reward or fear of punishment? In such an action, you just do something as though for the first time, without any calculation, without thinking, “Is this right? Is this wrong?” Have you ever known such an action,

such a state? We do occasionally experience it, do we not? And then what happens? After having acted in that state, we realize what an extraordinary experience it was—action with a sense of complete freedom, in which there was no resultant burden of repentance or self-glorification. It was a total action, without residue. But then we say, “I must make that experience real, lasting, I must perpetuate that state, I must always act in that way”. So we have again established a centre, a platform, a memory which we want to continue. There was a moment when we acted without calculation, with all our being—not even with all our being, but out of the fullness of something. That experience has left a mark on the mind as memory. We pursue this memory, thereby establishing another series of actions according to a pattern of thought; so there is a contradiction between that which was done spontaneously, totally, and the patterned or habitual action, which is always partial. And we never realize the contradiction, but say, “At least through memory I shall get back to the other”.

*Questioner: Because otherwise our life is empty. But this very effort to get back to the other state only makes the centre stronger.*

KRISHNAMURTI: Most of us have very rarely experienced that total action, if at all. What we know is partial action, which is so satisfying, so safe; and, as we don't really know anything else, we hold on to it. Now, is it possible—please follow this next question—is it possible for you and me to break up the partial? Do you understand?

*Questioner: Is it possible not to have the memory of total action? Can you give us some clue to that?*

KRISHNAMURTI: Is it ever possible not to have memory?

*Questioner: We have never had that experience.*

KRISHNAMURTI: To deny all memory is an impossibility, is it not, sir? Can you forget, remove from your consciousness the memory of where you live? Such a thing would be absurd, would it not? But if where you live is all-important to you, then the memory of it shadows your whole existence.

Look, sir: let us suppose I have had an experience of total action—action without thought, without the calculation of a cunning, purposeful mind. It has left a memory. I cannot forget that experience; the mind cannot say it did not happen. I know very well it happened. Now, *how* did it happen? It did not happen through any calculation, through any practice or determined effort. It just took place. Now, can I see the fact that it just took place, and also see that any cunning thought, any future purpose as a means to get it back, is the very denial of it?

I will explain again.

Let us say I am walking along the bank of this river, and the sunset is over the city. It is rather a beautiful sight and it leaves an imprint on the mind, so the next evening I go again to the river, hoping to capture that same feeling; but it does not happen, that experience does not take place. Why? Because I have gone the second time with the desire to experience it. The first time there was no desire; I was just walking, watching the sunset, seeing the swallows skim along the water's edge, and suddenly there was that extraordinary feeling. But the next evening I went with the special intent of capturing that feeling; it was a calculated act, while the other was not.

So, our problem is, can the mind be in a state of non-calculation? The experience has taken place, one cannot deny it; and is it possible not to pursue the memory of it in order to prolong that experience, in order to increase it? That is the question. Having had the

experience, with its memory, is it possible to look at that memory and not let it take root in the mind?

*Questioner: That is my question, which has not been answered. Is it possible not to cling to the memory of that experience?*

KRISHNAMURTI: The memory of it has afforded me a great deal of pleasure, so I give it importance. I don't just say it is part of life, and move on. Unpleasant memories we put away very quickly, or they are washed away psychologically, because for various reasons we don't want to retain them. But we cling to pleasant memories. Why? Because they delight us, they give us a sense of well-being, and all the rest of it. So the mind has allowed itself to give soil for the pleasant memories to take root. It does not say, "Pleasant memories are the same as unpleasant memories, let me not cling to either of them". You may say that you don't want to cling to pleasant memories, but you really do; so you see how the mind plays tricks on itself.

Also, sir, please look at the strange fact that we always want an answer. Do you think there is an answer to anything in life? To mechanical things there is an answer. If a motor goes wrong and I don't know how to put it right, I call a mechanic who does. But is life like that? Is there an answer to any problem life has created? Or is there only the problem—which I have to understand, and not ask how to answer it?

Here is a fact: the mind clings to pleasant memories and takes shelter in them. And I must understand, surely, why the mind holds on to the particular experience which it calls pleasure; I must see the complex machinery of this desire to hold on to the pleasant and let go of those things which are not pleasant; I must perceive the extraordinary subtlety of the mind which says, "I will let go of this and hold on to that". What is important is this perception, not what to do.

*Questioner: Will this not also become a practice?*

KRISHNAMURTI: When you are studying something living, it is not a practice. You can practise a mechanical skill in handling something static. But if you want to understand a child, can that become a practice? The child is living, moving, changing, mischievous, and to understand him, your mind must be as alive and as quick as he is. You see, sir, one of our problems is why the mind becomes so mechanical. I know that this question of practice arises everywhere. Should we not practise this or that in order to realize God?—as though God, life, truth, that extraordinary something, were static! You think that if you do certain things day after day, year in and year out, you will ultimately get the other. But is the other, whatever you may call it, so cheap as that?

*Questioner: You said something about our difficulty being a certain intrinsic sluggishness which prevents us from keeping pace with the flow of life. I wish you would go into that sluggishness a little bit.*

KRISHNAMURTI: The fact is that the mind is sluggish. How are we to awaken it? How is the mind to shed its sluggishness? That is the question. Now, is there a method? Please follow this carefully. Is there a method to throw off sluggishness? Let us keep it very simple. If I say I must not be sluggish, and I force myself to get up every morning at six o'clock, and all the rest of it, will my mind be less sluggish? Will it, sir? Actually, you think it will; otherwise you would throw aside your various practices, would you not? Now, can a sluggish mind be awakened through any practice? Or does practice merely further its sluggishness? The mind in itself is generally not sluggish; it has become sluggish *through* something. Take a child's mind, a young mind. It is not sluggish, is it?

*Questioner: But we are grown-up people, with established habits.*

KRISHNAMURTI: The young mind is active, curious, inquiring, it is never satisfied; it is always moving, moving, it has no frontiers. Now, why have we grown-up people become sluggish? Why, sir? Surely one of the major causes of this sluggishness is the fact that we have established a pattern of existence for ourselves; we want to be secure, do we not? Put it in different ways: economically, socially, religiously, in the family—in everything we want to be secure. Do you think a young mind wants to be secure? Later on it will make itself secure, and therefore become sluggish. So one of the major factors in our sluggishness, it seems to me, is this fact that the mind wants to be secure; and where there is a desire to be secure, there must be fear, anxiety, apprehension. Look at it, follow the chain of cause and effect. The mind desires to be secure, and thereby breeds fear. Having bred fear, it wants to escape from fear, so various forms of escape are established: belief, dogma, practices of different kinds, turning on the radio, gossiping, going to the temple, and a hundred other things. All these escapes are the causes of our indolence, of our sluggishness of mind. But once the mind sees the futility, the falseness of the urge to be secure in any way, then it is always active.

*Questioner: What is the state of mind of a child of three, who has no memory?*

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, is there such a thing as a mind without memory? Even modern electronic computers have memories, and they remember, like the human brain, by association, and so on. Our minds function mechanically, and if we are satisfied with that, there is no problem; but the moment you begin to question whether it is possible for the mind to be free from this mechanical

or habitual way of working, then this whole problem arises. Most of us are satisfied with the pleasantly mechanical operation of the mind; but if you say, "That is not good enough, I want to break up this mechanical habit", then you enter a field where there is no authority, and you have constantly to inquire, push, drive.

*Questioner: Is it possible for a man whose consciousness is full of experiences, to analyze himself?*

KRISHNAMURTI: What is involved in this question? What does it mean to analyze, to look into, to explore the complicated machinery of one's own mind? In that process there is the censor and the object which he examines, is there not? Please follow this a little, if you are not too tired. In analysis there is always the observer and the observed, the analyzer and the analyzed. Now, who is the analyzer, and what does he analyze? Has not that which is analyzed produced the analyzer? That is, sir, to put it differently, there is the thinker and the thought. The thinker says, "I am going to analyze thought"; but before he begins to analyze thought, should he not consider who is the thinker? Has not thought produced the thinker? Therefore he is part of thought. Right, sir? The thinker is part of thought, he is not separate from thought; therefore, as long as there is the thinker, the censor, the entity who evaluates, condemns, identifies, and so on, analysis will always produce a contradiction, will it not? Are you interested in going into this?

As long as there is a thinker apart from thought, all analysis can only produce further contradiction. So the problem is: is it possible to observe thought without the thinker? Can the mind look at something without bringing into existence the looker, the censor, the observer, the experiencer? Can I look at a flower without the observer who says, "That is

a daisy, I don't like it", or "That is a yellow marigold, I like it"? Now, when the mind is capable of looking without the censor, then there is no need for analysis, because in that state of observation there is a total comprehension. You see, sir, where there is a censor and that which he observes, there is a conflict; where there is a thinker apart from thought, there is a contradiction, but when the mind can free itself from this dualistic, contradictory process, then there comes a state of perception in which there is total comprehension.

So the problem is: can I look at myself without conflict? Can I see things in myself as they actually are, without the watcher who says, "How ugly I am", or "How good I am"? Can I just observe myself without introducing the censor?

*Questioner: Why do we want security?*

KRISHNAMURTI: Why does the mind want security? The whole social structure is based on the demand for security, is it not? Religiously, and in the everyday life that we know, the mind dreads the sense of negation, the feeling of complete isolation, which is fear. This is the beginning of the complex desire to be secure. One feels much safer if one has a secure relationship, doesn't one? When I feel perfectly safe in my job, I can go on mechanically, and I do not want to be disturbed. If my gods, my traditions, my beliefs give me safety, again I do not want to be disturbed—all of which means that one's mind is very sluggish. Realizing this, we say, "What shall I do, what practice shall I undertake in order to break up my sluggishness?" And so we enter the whole field of stupidity and illusion.

January 31, 1960

## IV

## TALK IN BANARAS

I think it is important to see the implications of agreement and disagreement, and also of conviction. All three imply a certain form of influence, do they not? Most of us can be persuaded by reason, by explanation, either to agree or to disagree with something, and there can be awakened in us a sense of conviction. But it seems to me that neither conviction nor disagreement can ever bring about understanding; and it is understanding alone that radically changes the nature of one's commitments and one's way of life.

So I think we ought to be very clear that here we are not concerned with persuading each other to adopt any particular form of thought, way of action, or pattern of belief. We are concerned primarily with understanding. This means that you and I must be very clear that in these talks there is no propaganda, that I am not out to convince you of *anything*, and that therefore there can be no question of agreement or disagreement. A mind that agrees now can also disagree later on, just as a mind that disagrees now will later on probably agree; and such a mind is not capable of understanding. Understanding is not born of agreement or disagreement, or of conviction; it is something entirely different. Understanding is the state of mind, surely, when there is complete attention, that is, when the mind sees totally, perceives comprehensively the whole problem; and in that state of mind there is neither agreement nor disagreement.

I think we ought to understand this fact very clearly, because the lives of most of us are guided, shaped by agreement, disagreement, or conviction. Today you are completely convinced of something, and ten years later you are equally convinced of something quite the reverse. You agree now, and later disagree. Surely, this process of con-

viction, agreement and disagreement breeds a state of contradiction; and a mind in a state of contradiction does not understand anything at all. Most of us live contradictory lives because our beliefs, our thoughts, our activities are based on the pattern of conviction, agreement and disagreement. But, as I said a little while ago, we are not here to persuade each other to think in any particular way or to adopt a certain course of action; therefore we ought to be able to listen to each other without the desire to resist or to shape our lives according to what is being said. As I am not trying to break down your pattern of living, or shake you loose from your beliefs and dogmas, or change the course of your action, our relationship is entirely different. We are trying to understand each other, and therefore there is no barrier, no resistance, and hence a sense of intimate communion. At least, that is what I feel there should be in these talks: a sense of intimate communion with each other about the ways of the mind, and about the heart that is conditioned by the ways of the mind.

So, listening itself becomes very important, and not agreement or disagreement, or saying, "I must be convinced before I can act". To me, that is all sheer nonsense, because it reflects very shallow thinking. In our relationship of listening, we are trying to understand, and that is much more difficult, much more arduous, it requires far greater attention than mere agreement or disagreement. With that clearly in mind, let us look at custom, which is called morality, and at goodness, which is called virtue.

Goodness is not the result of a culture, whereas custom or morality is. Morality which has become a custom is a cultivated habit in which the mind is pursuing a particular pattern of thought or experience, either self-imposed or imposed by society; and such a course of moral rectitude has nothing to do with goodness. The mind cannot flower in

custom, in habit, however long it may continue in that pattern; it can only decay. Custom is a withering process, and goodness is the only state in which the mind can flower and know the meaning of compassion. The mind may cultivate morality, discipline itself in rectitude, but such a mind is not compassionate. It is a bourgeois, respectable mind, a mind that is the result of adjustment to society, which demands a certain pattern of thought and activity.

In a habit of thought, in a pattern of belief, there is no joy, no flourishing of the mind; whereas, if you will consider goodness, you will see that in goodness there is a never-ending sense of being without contradiction. I think it is very important to understand this, because, most unfortunately, our lives are guided by custom and habit; therefore our lives are very narrow and shallow, however much we may decorate them with a pattern of glory or speculative delight. The mind which is a slave to a particular conditioning, to a pattern of routine or custom, is surely not a good mind. However difficult, however disciplinary, however respectable a custom may be, it is still only a pattern which the mind is following. But most of us are greatly concerned with respectability and recognition. We want to be recognized as respectable, because in that respectability we feel secure, both economically and inwardly. We like to fit into the pattern which custom has established as being right. If you go into it very deeply, you will see that custom is the door to safety, security; for when the mind has passed through that door, it can never go wrong in the sense of not being recognized as respectable.

I do hope that you are not merely listening to the words, or being mesmerized by them, but are self-critically aware, and that what is being said is therefore self-applicable. As I said at the beginning, we are intimately communing with each other about the complexities, the intricacies, the subtleties of our own minds; and to fathom the mind

one needs, not a defensive attitude, but a certain relaxed attention.

So, most of us are committed to a certain course of action, to a certain pattern of thought and behaviour which is recognized as respectable; and the morality which comes out of that desire to be secure, to be recognized as the right kind of man, has surely nothing whatsoever to do with goodness. Custom is national, sectarian, limited, whereas goodness has no nationality, it is not recognizable to a respectable mind. And that brings us to a very important point, which is: why does the mind have this compulsion, this urge to belong to something? Why does the mind wish to commit itself to a course of action, a way of life, a pattern of belief? Why? I wonder if you have thought about it? Why does the mind wish to commit itself to something, belong to something?

You know, many intellectual people, writers and so-called thinkers, have committed themselves to various organizations or activities. They become Communists, and because that movement is not satisfying, or is found to be destructive, they drop that and join something else. The desire to commit the mind to something exists not only among the high-brow intellectual people, but also in each one of us. You belong to a club, to a group, to such-and-such a society, to a particular religion or social activity; why? If you say, "I don't belong to anything, but I like to be with the members of this party or group", that is merely a way of avoiding the issue. We want to find out, surely, why there is in us this intense compulsion to belong to something—to a school of thought, to a particular philosophy, to this or that church or party. If we can understand why human beings at all levels have this craving to belong to something, then I think we shall be able to break down totally this constant formation of groups and sects, of conflicting nationalities and political parties, which is so destructive.

Do please pay a little attention to this. I know most of you belong to something or other, and I can imagine the sort of things you belong to. You form part of a group opposed to other groups, and each group seeks new members—you know that whole game, the racket of proselytizing and propaganda. But if you and I can find out—genuinely, with intelligence, with awareness—why the human mind has this extraordinary urge to belong to something, to commit itself to something, then we shall cease to be Hindus, Moslems, Christians, Communists, and all these absurd divisions will be swept away. Then we shall be human beings with the dignity of freedom, individuals who do not belong to a thing, and who therefore have a human relationship which is not based on the exclusiveness of family or community, of nation, race, or organized religion.

Why is it that we have this urge to commit ourselves to something? One cause of this urge, surely, is that we see confusion, misery, degradation, and we want to do something about it; and there are people who are already doing something about it. The Communists, the Socialists, the various political parties and religious groups—they all claim to be doing something to save the poor, to bring food, clothing and shelter to the needy. They talk about the welfare of the people, and they are very convincing. Many of them sacrifice, practise austerities, work from morning till night at something or other; and seeing them we say, "What extraordinary people they are". Because we want to help, we join them—and so we have committed ourselves. Just follow the sequence of it. After having committed ourselves to a party or a movement, we look at everything through that particular window, in terms of that particular course of action, and we don't want to be disturbed. Previously we were disturbed; but now, having committed ourselves, we are in a state of comparative tranquillity, and we don't want to be disturbed again. But there are other

parties and movements, all claiming the same thing, each with a clever leader who manifests an extraordinary, recognizable rectitude.

So the desire, the urge to do something, makes us commit ourselves to a particular course of action. We don't look to see whether that course of action includes the totality of man. Do you understand? I will explain what I mean. Any particular course of action is exclusive, and is therefore concerned only with a part of man. It is not concerned with the whole man—with his mind, his human quality, his goodness, and all that. It is a partial, not a total concern.

And we commit ourselves, not only to a particular course of action, but also to a particular belief or way of life. The man who becomes a *sannyasi*, a monk, a saint, has taken a vow to be celibate, to live in poverty, to offer prayers, to be this and not to be that; he has committed himself to that pattern. Why? Because it is a marvellous escape, a way of resolving all his problems by avoiding the constant lapping of life on the banks of his mind. He does not understand this movement of life, he does not know what it is all about, but at least his self-discipline and his belief give him a sense of safety, security, and there is always Jesus, or Buddha, or God at the end of it; so the man who is committed to such a course is perfectly happy. He says, "What is there to doubt? It is all quite clear. Come and join us, and you too will know all about it". He has become respectable, because it is recognized that he is doing the right things.

All this I have not said cynically or harshly. I am just pointing out, not criticizing, and you are just looking.

We also commit ourselves in order to gain personal and satisfactory ends, do we not? Committing myself to a society, or to a particular course of action, gives me a sense of permanency, a sense of security. Please, sirs, watch yourselves, do not just listen to what I am saying.

only through negation. Say, for instance, you realize that you cannot have a quiet mind as long as there is greed; so you are concerned, not with quietness of the mind, but with greed. You investigate to see if greed can be put away completely—or avarice, or envy. There is a constant purgation of the mind, a constant process of negation.

Sirs, if I want to understand the whole of this extraordinary thing called life, which must be the totality of all religions; if I want to be sensitive to it, appreciate it, and I see that nationalism, provincialism, or any limited attitude, is most destructive to that understanding, what happens? Surely, I realize that I must put away nationalism, that I must cease to be a Hindu, or a Moslem, or a Christian. I must cease to have this insular, nationalistic attitude, and be free of the authority of organized religions, dogmas, beliefs. So, through negation, the mind begins to perceive what is true. But most of us find it very difficult to understand through negation, because we think it will lead us nowhere, give us nothing. We say it will create a state of vacuum—as though our minds were not in a state of vacuum now!

To understand this immensity, the timeless quality of life, surely you must approach it through negation. It is because you are committed to a particular course of action, to a certain pattern of existence, that you find it difficult to free yourself from all that and face a new way, a new approach. After all, death is the ultimate negation. It is only when one dies now, while living, which means the constant breaking up of all the habit-patterns, the various attitudes, conclusions, ideas, beliefs that one has—it is only then that one can find out what life is. But most of us say, "I cannot break up the pattern, it is impossible, therefore I must learn a way of breaking it; I must practise a certain system, a method of breaking it up"; so we become slaves to the new pattern which we establish through practice. We have not broken the pattern,

but have only substituted a new pattern for the old.

Sirs, you nod your heads, you say this is so true, logical, clear—and you go right on with the pattern, old or new. It seems to me that the real problem is the sluggishness of the mind. Any fairly intelligent mind can see that inwardly we want security, a haven, a refuge where we shall not be disturbed, and that this urge to be secure creates a pattern of life which becomes a habit. But to break up that pattern requires a great deal of energy, thought, inquiry, and the mind refuses, because it says, "If I break up my pattern of life, what will become of me? What will this school be if the old pattern is broken? It will be chaos"—as if it were not chaos now!

You see, we are always living in a state of contradiction, from which we act, and therefore we create still more contradiction, more misery. We have made living a process of action *versus* being. The man who is very clever, who convinces others through his gift of the gab or his way of life, who puts on a loin cloth and outwardly becomes a saint, may inwardly be acting from a state of contradiction; he may be a most disastrously torn entity, but because he has the outward paraphernalia of a saintly life, we all follow him blindly. Whereas, if we really go into and understand this problem of contradiction within and without, then I think we shall come upon an action which is not away from life. It is part of our daily existence. Such action does not spring from *idea*, but from *being*. It is the comprehension of the whole of life.

I wonder if you are ever in the position of asking yourself, "What am I going to do?" If you do put that question to yourself, do you not always respond according to a pattern of thought which you have already established? You never allow yourself to ask, "What shall I do?"—and stop there. You always say, "This must be done, that must not be done". It is only the intelligent mind, the awakened mind,

the mind that sees the significance of this whole process—surely, it is only such a mind that asks, “What shall I do, what course of action shall I take?”, without a ready-made answer. Having through negation come to that point, such a mind begins to comprehend, to be sensitive to the whole problem of existence.

I wonder, sirs, if we can discuss all this? It is very difficult to discuss in the sense of exposing oneself. We may intellectually, verbally exchange a few ideas. But it is quite another matter to really expose ourselves, to be aware of the fact that we have committed ourselves to something, to a particular course of action, to see the limitations of that pattern, and to find out by discussing, thinking it out together, how to break it up. Such a discussion would be highly worth while, and I hope we can do it.

*Questioner: Every human being must sometime or other have expressed an action which has not broken the unitive feeling for life. Out of deep feeling a man acts, without any sense that his action springs from a separate centre. But even in such a case, where there is the spontaneous, original feeling of action which enriches life, the very momentum of that action seems to create a separate centre.*

KRISHNAMURTI: A gentleman suggests that it may not be possible to act with one's whole being, without having that action again bring about a separate centre from which other actions take place. Do you understand the problem? That is, have you ever known an action which involved your whole being, intellectual, physical, emotional—an action in which there was no motive, no thought of reward or fear of punishment? In such an action, you just do something as though for the first time, without any calculation, without thinking, “Is this right? Is this wrong?” Have you ever known such an action,

such a state? We do occasionally experience it, do we not? And then what happens? After having acted in that state, we realize what an extraordinary experience it was—action with a sense of complete freedom, in which there was no resultant burden of repentance or self-glorification. It was a total action, without residue. But then we say, “I must make that experience real, lasting, I must perpetuate that state, I must always act in that way”. So we have again established a centre, a platform, a memory which we want to continue. There was a moment when we acted without calculation, with all our being—not even with all our being, but out of the fullness of something. That experience has left a mark on the mind as memory. We pursue this memory, thereby establishing another series of actions according to a pattern of thought; so there is a contradiction between that which was done spontaneously, totally, and the patterned or habitual action, which is always partial. And we never realize the contradiction, but say, “At least through memory I shall get back to the other”.

*Questioner: Because otherwise our life is empty. But this very effort to get back to the other state only makes the centre stronger.*

KRISHNAMURTI: Most of us have very rarely experienced that total action, if at all. What we know is partial action, which is so satisfying, so safe; and, as we don't really know anything else, we hold on to it. Now, is it possible—please follow this next question—is it possible for you and me to break up the partial? Do you understand?

*Questioner: Is it possible not to have the memory of total action? Can you give us some clue to that?*

KRISHNAMURTI: Is it ever possible not to have memory?

*Questioner: We have never had that experience.*

KRISHNAMURTI: To deny all memory is an impossibility, is it not, sir? Can you forget, remove from your consciousness the memory of where you live? Such a thing would be absurd, would it not? But if where you live is all-important to you, then the memory of it shadows your whole existence.

Look, sir: let us suppose I have had an experience of total action—action without thought, without the calculation of a cunning, purposeful mind. It has left a memory. I cannot forget that experience; the mind cannot say it did not happen. I know very well it happened. Now, *how* did it happen? It did not happen through any calculation, through any practice or determined effort. It just took place. Now, can I see the fact that it just took place, and also see that any cunning thought, any future purpose as a means to get it back, is the very denial of it?

I will explain again.

Let us say I am walking along the bank of this river, and the sunset is over the city. It is rather a beautiful sight and it leaves an imprint on the mind, so the next evening I go again to the river, hoping to capture that same feeling; but it does not happen, that experience does not take place. Why? Because I have gone the second time with the desire to experience it. The first time there was no desire; I was just walking, watching the sunset, seeing the swallows skim along the water's edge, and suddenly there was that extraordinary feeling. But the next evening I went with the special intent of capturing that feeling; it was a calculated act, while the other was not.

So, our problem is, can the mind be in a state of non-calculation? The experience has taken place, one cannot deny it; and is it possible not to pursue the memory of it in order to prolong that experience, in order to increase it? That is the question. Having had the

experience, with its memory, is it possible to look at that memory and not let it take root in the mind?

*Questioner: That is my question, which has not been answered. Is it possible not to cling to the memory of that experience?*

KRISHNAMURTI: The memory of it has afforded me a great deal of pleasure, so I give it importance. I don't just say it is part of life, and move on. Unpleasant memories we put away very quickly, or they are washed away psychologically, because for various reasons we don't want to retain them. But we cling to pleasant memories. Why? Because they delight us, they give us a sense of well-being, and all the rest of it. So the mind has allowed itself to give soil for the pleasant memories to take root. It does not say, "Pleasant memories are the same as unpleasant memories, let me not cling to either of them". You may say that you don't want to cling to pleasant memories, but you really do; so you see how the mind plays tricks on itself.

Also, sir, please look at the strange fact that we always want an answer. Do you think there is an answer to anything in life? To mechanical things there is an answer. If a motor goes wrong and I don't know how to put it right, I call a mechanic who does. But is life like that? Is there an answer to any problem life has created? Or is there only the problem—which I have to understand, and not ask how to answer it?

Here is a fact: the mind clings to pleasant memories and takes shelter in them. And I must understand, surely, why the mind holds on to the particular experience which it calls pleasure; I must see the complex machinery of this desire to hold on to the pleasant and let go of those things which are not pleasant; I must perceive the extraordinary subtlety of the mind which says, "I will let go of this and hold on to that". What is important is this perception, not what to do.

*Questioner: Will this not also become a practice?*

KRISHNAMURTI: When you are studying something living, it is not a practice. You can practise a mechanical skill in handling something static. But if you want to understand a child, can that become a practice? The child is living, moving, changing, mischievous, and to understand him, your mind must be as alive and as quick as he is. You see, sir, one of our problems is why the mind becomes so mechanical. I know that this question of practice arises everywhere. Should we not practise this or that in order to realize God?—as though God, life, truth, that extraordinary something, were static! You think that if you do certain things day after day, year in and year out, you will ultimately get the other. But is the other, whatever you may call it, so cheap as that?

*Questioner: You said something about our difficulty being a certain intrinsic sluggishness which prevents us from keeping pace with the flow of life. I wish you would go into that sluggishness a little bit.*

KRISHNAMURTI: The fact is that the mind is sluggish. How are we to awaken it? How is the mind to shed its sluggishness? That is the question. Now, is there a method? Please follow this carefully. Is there a method to throw off sluggishness? Let us keep it very simple. If I say I must not be sluggish, and I force myself to get up every morning at six o'clock, and all the rest of it, will my mind be less sluggish? Will it, sir? Actually, you think it will; otherwise you would throw aside your various practices, would you not? Now, can a sluggish mind be awakened through any practice? Or does practice merely further its sluggishness? The mind in itself is generally not sluggish; it has become sluggish *through* something. Take a child's mind, a young mind. It is not sluggish, is it?

*Questioner: But we are grown-up people, with established habits.*

KRISHNAMURTI: The young mind is active, curious, inquiring, it is never satisfied; it is always moving, moving, it has no frontiers. Now, why have we grown-up people become sluggish? Why, sir? Surely one of the major causes of this sluggishness is the fact that we have established a pattern of existence for ourselves; we want to be secure, do we not? Put it in different ways: economically, socially, religiously, in the family—in everything we want to be secure. Do you think a young mind wants to be secure? Later on it will make itself secure, and therefore become sluggish. So one of the major factors in our sluggishness, it seems to me, is this fact that the mind wants to be secure; and where there is a desire to be secure, there must be fear, anxiety, apprehension. Look at it, follow the chain of cause and effect. The mind desires to be secure, and thereby breeds fear. Having bred fear, it wants to escape from fear, so various forms of escape are established: belief, dogma, practices of different kinds, turning on the radio, gossiping, going to the temple, and a hundred other things. All these escapes are the causes of our indolence, of our sluggishness of mind. But once the mind sees the futility, the falseness of the urge to be secure in any way, then it is always active.

*Questioner: What is the state of mind of a child of three, who has no memory?*

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, is there such a thing as a mind without memory? Even modern electronic computers have memories, and they remember, like the human brain, by association, and so on. Our minds function mechanically, and if we are satisfied with that, there is no problem; but the moment you begin to question whether it is possible for the mind to be free from this mechanical

or habitual way of working, then this whole problem arises. Most of us are satisfied with the pleasantly mechanical operation of the mind; but if you say, "That is not good enough, I want to break up this mechanical habit", then you enter a field where there is no authority, and you have constantly to inquire, push, drive.

*Questioner: Is it possible for a man whose consciousness is full of experiences, to analyze himself?*

KRISHNAMURTI: What is involved in this question? What does it mean to analyze, to look into, to explore the complicated machinery of one's own mind? In that process there is the censor and the object which he examines, is there not? Please follow this a little, if you are not too tired. In analysis there is always the observer and the observed, the analyzer and the analyzed. Now, who is the analyzer, and what does he analyze? Has not that which is analyzed produced the analyzer? That is, sir, to put it differently, there is the thinker and the thought. The thinker says, "I am going to analyze thought"; but before he begins to analyze thought, should he not consider who is the thinker? Has not thought produced the thinker? Therefore he is part of thought. Right, sir? The thinker is part of thought, he is not separate from thought; therefore, as long as there is the thinker, the censor, the entity who evaluates, condemns, identifies, and so on, analysis will always produce a contradiction, will it not? Are you interested in going into this?

As long as there is a thinker apart from thought, all analysis can only produce further contradiction. So the problem is: is it possible to observe thought without the thinker? Can the mind look at something without bringing into existence the looker, the censor, the observer, the experiencer? Can I look at a flower without the observer who says, "That is

a daisy, I don't like it", or "That is a yellow marigold, I like it"? Now, when the mind is capable of looking without the censor, then there is no need for analysis, because in that state of observation there is a total comprehension. You see, sir, where there is a censor and that which he observes, there is a conflict; where there is a thinker apart from thought, there is a contradiction, but when the mind can free itself from this dualistic, contradictory process, then there comes a state of perception in which there is total comprehension.

So the problem is: can I look at myself without conflict? Can I see things in myself as they actually are, without the watcher who says, "How ugly I am", or "How good I am"? Can I just observe myself without introducing the censor?

*Questioner: Why do we want security?*

KRISHNAMURTI: Why does the mind want security? The whole social structure is based on the demand for security, is it not? Religiously, and in the everyday life that we know, the mind dreads the sense of negation, the feeling of complete isolation, which is fear. This is the beginning of the complex desire to be secure. One feels much safer if one has a secure relationship, doesn't one? When I feel perfectly safe in my job, I can go on mechanically, and I do not want to be disturbed. If my gods, my traditions, my beliefs give me safety, again I do not want to be disturbed—all of which means that one's mind is very sluggish. Realizing this, we say, "What shall I do, what practice shall I undertake in order to break up my sluggishness?" And so we enter the whole field of stupidity and illusion.

*January 31, 1960*

## IV

## TALK IN BANARAS

I think it is important to see the implications of agreement and disagreement, and also of conviction. All three imply a certain form of influence, do they not? Most of us can be persuaded by reason, by explanation, either to agree or to disagree with something, and there can be awakened in us a sense of conviction. But it seems to me that neither conviction nor disagreement can ever bring about understanding; and it is understanding alone that radically changes the nature of one's commitments and one's way of life.

So I think we ought to be very clear that here we are not concerned with persuading each other to adopt any particular form of thought, way of action, or pattern of belief. We are concerned primarily with understanding. This means that you and I must be very clear that in these talks there is no propaganda, that I am not out to convince you of *anything*, and that therefore there can be no question of agreement or disagreement. A mind that agrees now can also disagree later on, just as a mind that disagrees now will later on probably agree; and such a mind is not capable of understanding. Understanding is not born of agreement or disagreement, or of conviction; it is something entirely different. Understanding is the state of mind, surely, when there is complete attention, that is, when the mind sees totally, perceives comprehensively the whole problem; and in that state of mind there is neither agreement nor disagreement.

I think we ought to understand this fact very clearly, because the lives of most of us are guided, shaped by agreement, disagreement, or conviction. Today you are completely convinced of something, and ten years later you are equally convinced of something quite the reverse. You agree now, and later disagree. Surely, this process of con-

viction, agreement and disagreement breeds a state of contradiction; and a mind in a state of contradiction does not understand anything at all. Most of us live contradictory lives because our beliefs, our thoughts, our activities are based on the pattern of conviction, agreement and disagreement. But, as I said a little while ago, we are not here to persuade each other to think in any particular way or to adopt a certain course of action; therefore we ought to be able to listen to each other without the desire to resist or to shape our lives according to what is being said. As I am not trying to break down your pattern of living, or shake you loose from your beliefs and dogmas, or change the course of your action, our relationship is entirely different. We are trying to understand each other, and therefore there is no barrier, no resistance, and hence a sense of intimate communion. At least, that is what I feel there should be in these talks: a sense of intimate communion with each other about the ways of the mind, and about the heart that is conditioned by the ways of the mind.

So, listening itself becomes very important, and not agreement or disagreement, or saying, "I must be convinced before I can act". To me, that is all sheer nonsense, because it reflects very shallow thinking. In our relationship of listening, we are trying to understand, and that is much more difficult, much more arduous, it requires far greater attention than mere agreement or disagreement. With that clearly in mind, let us look at custom, which is called morality, and at goodness, which is called virtue.

Goodness is not the result of a culture, whereas custom or morality is. Morality which has become a custom is a cultivated habit in which the mind is pursuing a particular pattern of thought or experience, either self-imposed or imposed by society; and such a course of moral rectitude has nothing to do with goodness. The mind cannot flower in

custom, in habit, however long it may continue in that pattern; it can only decay. Custom is a withering process, and goodness is the only state in which the mind can flower and know the meaning of compassion. The mind may cultivate morality, discipline itself in rectitude, but such a mind is not compassionate. It is a bourgeois, respectable mind, a mind that is the result of adjustment to society, which demands a certain pattern of thought and activity.

In a habit of thought, in a pattern of belief, there is no joy, no flourishing of the mind; whereas, if you will consider goodness, you will see that in goodness there is a never-ending sense of being without contradiction. I think it is very important to understand this, because, most unfortunately, our lives are guided by custom and habit; therefore our lives are very narrow and shallow, however much we may decorate them with a pattern of glory or speculative delight. The mind which is a slave to a particular conditioning, to a pattern of routine or custom, is surely not a good mind. However difficult, however disciplinary, however respectable a custom may be, it is still only a pattern which the mind is following. But most of us are greatly concerned with respectability and recognition. We want to be recognized as respectable, because in that respectability we feel secure, both economically and inwardly. We like to fit into the pattern which custom has established as being right. If you go into it very deeply, you will see that custom is the door to safety, security; for when the mind has passed through that door, it can never go wrong in the sense of not being recognized as respectable.

I do hope that you are not merely listening to the words, or being mesmerized by them, but are self-critically aware, and that what is being said is therefore self-applicable. As I said at the beginning, we are intimately communing with each other about the complexities, the intricacies, the subtleties of our own minds; and to fathom the mind

one needs, not a defensive attitude, but a certain relaxed attention.

So, most of us are committed to a certain course of action, to a certain pattern of thought and behaviour which is recognized as respectable; and the morality which comes out of that desire to be secure, to be recognized as the right kind of man, has surely nothing whatsoever to do with goodness. Custom is national, sectarian, limited, whereas goodness has no nationality, it is not recognizable to a respectable mind. And that brings us to a very important point, which is: why does the mind have this compulsion, this urge to belong to something? Why does the mind wish to commit itself to a course of action, a way of life, a pattern of belief? Why? I wonder if you have thought about it? Why does the mind wish to commit itself to something, belong to something?

You know, many intellectual people, writers and so-called thinkers, have committed themselves to various organizations or activities. They become Communists, and because that movement is not satisfying, or is found to be destructive, they drop that and join something else. The desire to commit the mind to something exists not only among the high-brow intellectual people, but also in each one of us. You belong to a club, to a group, to such-and-such a society, to a particular religion or social activity; why? If you say, "I don't belong to anything, but I like to be with the members of this party or group", that is merely a way of avoiding the issue. We want to find out, surely, why there is in us this intense compulsion to belong to something—to a school of thought, to a particular philosophy, to this or that church or party. If we can understand why human beings at all levels have this craving to belong to something, then I think we shall be able to break down totally this constant formation of groups and sects, of conflicting nationalities and political parties, which is so destructive.

Do please pay a little attention to this. I know most of you belong to something or other, and I can imagine the sort of things you belong to. You form part of a group opposed to other groups, and each group seeks new members—you know that whole game, the racket of proselytizing and propaganda. But if you and I can find out—genuinely, with intelligence, with awareness—why the human mind has this extraordinary urge to belong to something, to commit itself to something, then we shall cease to be Hindus, Moslems, Christians, Communists, and all these absurd divisions will be swept away. Then we shall be human beings with the dignity of freedom, individuals who do not belong to a thing, and who therefore have a human relationship which is not based on the exclusiveness of family or community, of nation, race, or organized religion.

Why is it that we have this urge to commit ourselves to something? One cause of this urge, surely, is that we see confusion, misery, degradation, and we want to do something about it; and there are people who are already doing something about it. The Communists, the Socialists, the various political parties and religious groups—they all claim to be doing something to save the poor, to bring food, clothing and shelter to the needy. They talk about the welfare of the people, and they are very convincing. Many of them sacrifice, practise austerities, work from morning till night at something or other; and seeing them we say, "What extraordinary people they are". Because we want to help, we join them—and so we have committed ourselves. Just follow the sequence of it. After having committed ourselves to a party or a movement, we look at everything through that particular window, in terms of that particular course of action, and we don't want to be disturbed. Previously we were disturbed; but now, having committed ourselves, we are in a state of comparative tranquillity, and we don't want to be disturbed again. But there are other

parties and movements, all claiming the same thing, each with a clever leader who manifests an extraordinary, recognizable rectitude.

So the desire, the urge to do something, makes us commit ourselves to a particular course of action. We don't look to see whether that course of action includes the totality of man. Do you understand? I will explain what I mean. Any particular course of action is exclusive, and is therefore concerned only with a part of man. It is not concerned with the whole man—with his mind, his human quality, his goodness, and all that. It is a partial, not a total concern.

And we commit ourselves, not only to a particular course of action, but also to a particular belief or way of life. The man who becomes a *sannyasi*, a monk, a saint, has taken a vow to be celibate, to live in poverty, to offer prayers, to be this and not to be that; he has committed himself to that pattern. Why? Because it is a marvellous escape, a way of resolving all his problems by avoiding the constant lapping of life on the banks of his mind. He does not understand this movement of life, he does not know what it is all about, but at least his self-discipline and his belief give him a sense of safety, security, and there is always Jesus, or Buddha, or God at the end of it; so the man who is committed to such a course is perfectly happy. He says, "What is there to doubt? It is all quite clear. Come and join us, and you too will know all about it". He has become respectable, because it is recognized that he is doing the right things.

All this I have not said cynically or harshly. I am just pointing out, not criticizing, and you are just looking.

We also commit ourselves in order to gain personal and satisfactory ends, do we not? Committing myself to a society, or to a particular course of action, gives me a sense of permanency, a sense of security. Please, sirs, watch yourselves, do not just listen to what I am saying.

You all belong to these various things, and you never say, "Why do I belong, why do I commit myself to anything?" And I think that it is very important to understand why we commit ourselves to something; because many people have committed themselves to one thing after another, and at the end of their life they are completely disillusioned, miserable, frustrated, unhappy. Belonging, committing oneself to something, is the cultivation of that rectitude which is based on custom, and which has nothing whatsoever to do with goodness. It is a subtle form of hypocrisy. I don't have to commit myself to an ideal. I am what I am. Being envious, why should I introduce a contradictory factor, which I call the ideal? My concern is to understand envy, go into it, see all its implications; and through that understanding of envy, goodness comes. Goodness is not a pattern of action—for God's sake, do see that the two have nothing to do with each other whatsoever. A man who has no love in his heart may follow a pattern of gentleness; but such a mind is corrupt, it is a disintegrating mind. That is why it is very important to understand this process of belonging to something, of committing, dedicating oneself to something.

You see, behind all this belonging to something there is the intense desire to be secure; and strangely, that sense of security depends on social recognition. If I join a recognized political party, or belong to a recognized religious order, or take up a recognized course of activity, in that recognition I feel safe, both economically and inwardly, and it also gives me certain personal advantages. So one begins to see very clearly that a mind which is committed to something—to Jesus, to Buddha, to any particular way of life according to which it is disciplining itself—can never know goodness. It can never know what love is; and love, after all, is the only solvent for all our problems. A mind that does not know what love is, that is not aware of

the quality of that feeling, may pursue any course of action, however respectable, however right, but it will lead only to further misery and destruction for others and for itself.

So one sees that custom, or the cultivation of habit as virtue, has inherent in it a destructive, disintegrating element. And if one sees this process clearly, if one understands it and does not cut it off volitionally, it drops away as a withered leaf drops from the tree; and in that dropping away there is a new budding of goodness, a new sense of unfoldment, and therefore a way of life which is entirely different from the other. *That*, it seems to me, is the only religious life—not all the things which you practise, which is not the religious life at all; it is just a matter of convenience, a ceremonial robe which you put on. It is not the mind that is ridden by custom, by habit, or committed to a course of action, but it is the good mind which can receive what is not measurable. The good mind does not want anything. In itself it is a movement, it is a state of bliss in which there is no demand. It is only when the mind ceases to demand, ceases to ask, to search—it is only then that reality comes into being.

I have talked for forty minutes, and now perhaps we can discuss a little. But what do we mean by a discussion? It is not a school-boy or college debate in which you put forward one set of ideas, and I another, and we wrangle about it to see who comes out victorious. If that is all you are interested in, then you are victorious already; you have already won. But if we want to understand the problems of life, then we must not be in a debating mood, we must not discuss in an argumentative or contentious spirit. Life is a problem to most of us, and words will not solve it, explanations will not heal our wounds. We have to understand it; and to understand requires a great deal of love, gentleness, hesitancy, humility, not argumentation as to who is right and who is wrong.

*Questioner: What is the difference between the spirit and the body?*

KRISHNAMURTI: Is there such a division? I don't know why we ask such questions, first of all. Generally we have been told this or that, and we want to find out what is true. Now, to find out, to discover, to uncover the truth of anything, demands a mind which does not want a conclusion, and which does not start from a conclusion, either negative or positive, but says, "I don't know. Let us inquire". When such a mind asks a question, its meaning is quite different from that of the mind which says, "Tell me, I want to know the answer". Life being immense, vast, immeasurable, how can you hold it in your fist and say, "I have found the answer"?

So, with our minds in that state of inquiry, let us ask: is there a division between the mind and the body? Is the spirit or the soul different from the mind? Or is it all one, a unitary process which man breaks up into several parts for his own convenience, saying, "This is spirit, this is matter, this is the body, this is the soul", and then tries to unify them again? And when he can't unify them, he talks about the *Atman*, and escapes through that idea. Surely, each one of us is a total human being. Though the body is separate from the mind, man is a total entity; and to perceive, to understand this totality, to feel it, to relish it, to see the beauty of it, is much more important than to say there is a soul apart from the ugly little mind, and garland the soul with your words.

What is your question, sir?

*Questioner: You said there is a pattern of life based on agreement and disagreement, and that a mind which conforms to this pattern is not a good mind. It is only a good mind that is capable of understanding, and a good mind never conforms to a pattern. But is there anybody, in any mode of existence, who does not conform to a pattern? You also conform to a*

*pattern, sir, in saying, "This is a good mind, and that is a bad mind".*

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, I am afraid you did not listen to the talk. I was just pointing out a fact—which does not mean that I condemn or approve of it. It is so. I did not say, "This is a good mind, and that is a bad mind". It was never in my mind to create this division between the two.

*Questioner: But, sir, you did.*

KRISHNAMURTI: You win, sir.

*Questioner: I have a question. So long as I am egoistic, my life must be spent in pursuing one thing after another. Can I think myself out of it?*

KRISHNAMURTI: Sir, you can think yourself out of anything. To think yourself out of something is to create illusion, but that illusion may seem extraordinarily real. Living here in Banaras, with all the filth, the poverty, the ugliness, the brutality, the starvation, the callousness, I can live in a tower of isolation and say these things do not exist. I have thought myself out of something; but that is obviously not facing the fact.

The fact is that most of us are extraordinarily self-centred, only we don't want to admit it. It is this centre that has committed itself to a course of action which looks generous, noble, religious, and all the rest of it; but the centre is still there. This centre, with its self-interested activities, has to be understood; and to understand is not to condemn it, but to see it as clearly as one sees one's face in a mirror. One has to pursue it right through, in both the conscious and the unconscious; one has to uncover it, see all its ways, however subtle; and in the understanding of it, there is a withering away of that thing which is the centre.

*Questioner: How is one to understand the unconscious mind?*

KRISHNAMURTI: That is rather a difficult problem, and the question is put by a young student. As we all know, there is the conscious mind and the unconscious mind. The river is not only the shining, sparkling surface which we see, but also the dark, hidden, living waters below. In the same way, consciousness is the hidden as well as the surface mind. And just as the river, with its surface and its hidden depths, is a total thing, so also is consciousness, only we have divided it for convenience into the conscious and the unconscious mind. In actual fact, there is no such division; there are no gates which shut you off from the unconscious while you function on the conscious level.

The conscious mind is superficially adjusting, reflecting, learning, acquiring information, is it not? You are learning modern physics. You are adjusting on the surface to a certain course of action which is foreign to the ancient culture in which you were born. That is very necessary, because you have to earn a livelihood, adjust yourself to the modern world, and all the rest of it. But there is also the deeper part of consciousness, the hidden or unconscious mind, which is the racial inheritance, the residue of all the past, of custom, of tradition, of what your ancestors have been, or what you have repeatedly been told. So there is a contradiction between the thing below, the residue of the past, and that which on top is adjusting itself to the modern world. Do you follow?

Below the surface you are a Hindu, a Moslem, or what you will; on top you are studying to be an engineer, or a scientist. The thing below is much stronger than the thing on top, which has barely scratched the surface. Unless we understand the totality of this movement, which is made up of the surface as well as the residue of the past which is below the surface, life becomes a state of contradiction.

Now, how is one to understand that which is below the surface? That is your point. In other words, how is the conscious mind to understand something with which it is not familiar? The conscious mind starts by analyzing, dissecting; and with this positive approach, can you observe that which is essentially negative? Do you understand? I will go into it, but not much, because it would take too long.

Let us suppose you are grown-up and married, with children of your own. Your conscious mind is occupied all day long with going to the office, with your money, with your customs, your gossip; it is eternally chattering. But when you go to sleep at night, the conscious mind becomes somewhat quiet. Then the unconscious gives you a hint in the form of a symbol, and when you wake up in the morning you say, "I have had a marvellous dream". The unconscious mind is trying to convey something through a hint, a symbol, a dream, which it wants the conscious mind to understand. Because it is not capable of understanding, the conscious mind has to interpret that dream; so you have the further complication of the interpreter, who may interpret it wrongly, and again there is a conflict.

Now, to understand the total movement of the mind, of the unconscious as well as the conscious, one must be aware of every thought, of every feeling during the day. It is neither difficult nor easy. It requires a mind that says, "I really want to understand this whole process". Then you are watchful, attentive, awake to everything that is going on all day, aware of every movement, every hint, every flutter of the mind and the heart. And when your mind is thus attentive—not concentrated, but attentive—then, when you do go to sleep, the unconscious as well as the conscious mind is quiet, it is no longer giving you hints. The whole mind is quiet, not just because it is tired, but it is quiet in a different way altogether. And in that real quietness, in that deep stillness, there

is a new flowering, a new state of being.

I

TALK IN NEW DELHI

*Questioner: How can we be revolutionary when we are not?*

KRISHNAMURTI: You know, the young mind, the innocent mind is always revolutionary—revolutionary in the sense of never accepting, always inquiring, exploring, seeking, wanting to know. Such a mind has no frontiers, no boundaries. But through so-called education and respectability, through adjustment to society, through its own ambitions, vanities, and all the rest of it, the young mind becomes an old mind, a sterile mind which functions only within the field of habits, customs and commitments.

Now, most people think that being revolutionary is a matter of committing oneself to a so-called revolutionary organization or activity. They become Socialists, or Communists, or Trotskyites, or Stalinists; they belong to this or that movement of the ultra-left, to various forms of tyranny, and they call that being revolutionary. But when one observes, one sees that that is no revolution at all. It is merely a new commitment, the substitution of one pattern for another. If I cease to be a Hindu and become a Christian, and I say there has been a tremendous revolution in my life, it is sheer nonsense. I have merely left one cage and entered another. A revolutionary mind has no cage, no pattern. It is a mind that is truly religious because it has no authority, and therefore it is a really good mind—not opposed to the bad mind, as that gentleman suggested. You see, revolution means a real change, a mutation or transmutation of the centre.

February 7, 1960

If I may, I would like to talk over with you some of the problems which all of us are confronted with. In talking over these problems with each other, we must clearly understand that any form of influence or persuasion is very temporary, affecting only the conscious mind, and does not bring about a radical change at all. And a radical change is necessary. Some form of revolution in the quality of our thinking is obviously essential; and we can bring about a fundamental change in the mind only when there is a sensitivity to the problems, and not mere acceptance or denial either of the problems or their so-called solutions. If you and I do not clearly understand this, we shall be merely wasting our time. I do not want to influence you in any way whatsoever. It is not my intention to persuade you to act in any particular direction, nor do I wish to determine a course of action for you to pursue. To me, all such forms of persuasion or influence, are a denial of freedom. There is neither good influence nor bad influence; there is only influence. Influence is propaganda, and propaganda always destroys the capacity to think clearly.

If this is very well understood between us—that there is no intention on my part to persuade you to think in any particular direction—, then let us try to think over together the many problems that we have; let us consider them clearly, dispassionately, so that the mind is no longer bound, no longer a slave to any pattern of behaviour or thought; because negative thinking is the highest form of thinking.

By 'negative' I do not mean the opposite of the positive. Most of us think positively, in terms of do and don't, which is adjustment to a conclusion, to a pattern of thought or action. The pattern may be the result of a great deal of experience, it may be the outcome

of research and many experiments, but it is still a pattern; and thinking according to a pattern, however conclusive, satisfactory, is a process of conformity which always conditions the mind.

But it seems to me that to deny such positive thinking, and merely to revolt against the pattern, will in no way create thinking which is of the highest quality. The highest form of thinking is negative thinking—that is, just to be aware of the fallacies of positive thinking, to see the conflicts it creates, and from there to think clearly, dispassionately, without any prejudice or conclusion.

Perhaps, this evening, we can go into all that, because we have many problems; and I think no problem is isolated. Every problem is related to every other problem, and the individual problem is obviously the problem of the world. When we divide problems as individual and global, individual and social, individual and political, individual and communal, I think such dividing is fallacious and does not bring about comprehension at all. What brings about comprehension is this awareness or perception of the total, undivided problem.

Some of you may be hearing all this for the first time, and your difficulty will be to understand what the words are meant to convey. Words are symbols, and merely to adhere to symbols, stops all thinking. Whereas, if we can slip through the symbols, through the words and definitions—not denying them, but seeing their limitations and going beyond them—, then, perhaps, we shall be able to understand the problem.

So, what is the central problem for each one of us, for the mind? In putting this question, I am not preparing to point out the problem so that you can either accept or deny it. We are trying to understand—which means there can be neither denial nor acceptance. The moment you deny or accept, all investigation ceases, all inquiry into the pro-

blem comes to an end. And it is also very important to be able to listen to the question, is it not? Most of us, I think, do not listen at all. We hear a great deal, but we do not listen, just as we do not see anything without interpretation.

If I may, I would like to explain a little what it means to listen. Listening is an art. To listen, you must give total attention; and you cannot give total attention when your mind is interpreting what it is hearing, translating it in terms of what you already know or have experienced. A mind that listens in the true sense of the word does not interpret what it hears according to its own experiences. It is not interpreting at all: it is totally attentive. Such listening without interpretation gives to the mind a temporary focus in which there is that strange quality of total attention.

I wonder if you have ever listened to anything with total attention? To most of us, attention implies the effort to concentrate; but where there is an effort to concentrate, there is no listening and therefore no understanding. Listening implies, surely, a mind that is completely relaxed and yet attentive. If you will kindly experiment with this state of relaxed attention, which is listening, we can proceed to inquire—and inquiry will then be neither yours nor mine. Such inquiry is not conditioned, it is not in response to any demand or necessity; therefore such inquiry begins to free the mind.

It seems to me the central problem for all of us is the fact that we are slaves—slaves to society, slaves to public opinion, slaves to our professions, slaves to our religious dogmas and beliefs. And a mind that is slavish obviously cannot perceive what is true. A man who spends thirty, forty, or fifty years in his profession as an engineer, a bureaucrat, a politician, a physicist, becomes a slave to that profession, does he not? He may mutter on the side about reality, God, goodness, virtue, and all the rest of it; but such a mind is obviously not a

free mind. And surely it is only a free mind that is capable of inquiry, of search, of finding and unfolding.

The problem is not what to do about being a slave, but to understand the depth of our slavery. To me, that word 'understanding' does not mean merely grasping a problem intellectually; it has quite a different meaning. Intellectually, verbally one may comprehend all the arguments, all the reasons and deductions, and come to some kind of conclusion; but surely that is not understanding. Understanding demands a comprehensive perception of the whole process of existence, not just a sectional or fragmentary grasp of one problem. Life covers everything, it has no beginning and no end; life is the good and the bad; life is the Communist, the Socialist, the Capitalist, the Imperialist; life is that total something in which dwell the painter, the musician, the man of sorrows. If I want to understand this extraordinary thing called life, with all its vastness—and not only the vastness, but also the particular, the limited, the life of a person in a small village, or in a town; if I want to understand this extraordinary thing called life, I must have the capacity to approach it totally. It seems to me that we cannot approach it totally because our minds are so very limited, and from that limitation we respond to the challenge of life; therefore there is everlasting conflict, misery, strife. So the problem is, surely, whether the mind is capable of a total response, so that it does not create problems and is not in constant conflict with itself.

Most of us do not seem to realize to what an extent the mind is a slave, both outwardly and inwardly; and I do not think it is possible for the mind to free itself from this slavery until it is aware of its own slavishness. The mind is a slave to tradition, to experience, to habit, and without understanding the whole process of how habit enslaves the mind, merely trying to free the mind from a particular habit, has no value at all.

Do please listen to this a little attentively, at least for the time being, because we shall tackle as we go along the many questions that will inevitably arise in your minds in the course of these talks. Unless we grasp from the very beginning the importance of seeing what *is*, which is to perceive the actual state of one's own mind, merely to ask questions and try to find answers is utterly futile. There are these many problems—the problem of starvation, the problem of freedom, the problem of relationship, the problem of whether truth, reality exists or does not exist, the problem of meditation, and the extraordinary problem of creation, the movement of life. All these problems do affect us, superficially or most profoundly, and we cannot find an answer to any of them if we do not understand the actual fact of what *is*. Most of us are unwilling to face the fact of what *is*, we want to escape from it; and there are many escapes which have become traditional. So, the important thing is not how to free the mind—what is the means, the method, the discipline, and all the rest of it—but to understand the fact of one's own slavery to habit. It is the perception of this fact that is going to bring freedom to the mind, and not the resolution or determination to free the mind.

Most of us would be horrified if we were really aware of what slaves we are to habit. We want to get into good habits, which are called virtues; but habit is mechanical, and a virtue ceases to be a virtue when it becomes habitual. A mind that practises humility and makes a habit of it, has ceased to be humble; it has lost the quality of that strange thing called humility. And yet, if you observe very carefully the movements of your own mind, you will see that the mind almost invariably creates for itself a pattern of habit, and then functions mechanically in that habit.

We divide habit into the good and the bad, the good being the respectable, that which is recognized as virtue by society;

but virtue which is recognized by society, which has become respectable, is no longer virtue. The mind is everlastingly seeking a mode of activity which is purely mechanical, and when it finds such a state, it is satisfied; because in that state of mechanical functioning, mechanical thinking, there is a minimum of friction, of conflict. That is why habit becomes very important to the mind, and why the mind becomes a slave to habit.

Actually, habit *is* the mind, just as time is the mind. After all, we are the result of time, not only in the chronological sense, but inwardly, psychologically we are the result of time, of many centuries. We are slaves to tradition, not only to the tradition of a thousand years, but to the tradition of yesterday. Again, if you go into yourself, observe your own mind, you will see that such functioning in accordance with tradition is always mechanical, whether the tradition is ancient, or recently set going by the demands of the present, the immediate.

Sirs, may I suggest that you do not just listen to the talk, but actually be aware of yourselves. The talk is useful only as a mirror to reflect the functioning of your own minds. If the description becomes all-important, and you are merely accepting or denying the description, then you are not observing your own minds; and if you are not observing your own minds, then these talks are utterly futile and a waste of time. The description, the symbol is never the real. The word 'mind' is not the mind, and if you merely cling to the word, then the extraordinary quality, the subtlety, the deep movement of the mind will pass you by.

So, what is it you are actually doing? You are listening, surely, in order to observe your own mind in action, and to be aware of the nature of your own thought. In thus being aware of your mind and its activities, you neither accept nor deny. There is no conviction, one way or the other. You are

merely observing the fact; and the observation of a fact does not demand any previous conclusion.

As I said, our minds are the result of time. Our minds are the result of influence, whether it be the Communist influence, or any other. Our minds are bound by tradition, which is a form of influence. Our minds are the result of experience, and experience has become tradition. To all this our minds are slaves. Through so called progress, culture and education, through political activities, through propaganda, through various forms of adjustment and conformity, the margin of freedom is getting narrower and narrower. I do not know if you are aware of how little freedom we have. The politicians, the specialists, the various professions, the radio and television, the books and newspapers we read—all these things are influencing, conditioning the mind, and so depriving us of this extraordinary feeling of freedom. That is the fact; and we are concerned with the fact, not with what we should do in order to be free. We shall understand what is to be done when we are sensitive to what *is*; and sensitivity to what *is* depends on the quality of the mind that gives attention to what *is*. One may say, "Yes, I am a slave, but I cannot change, because I am tied to my job; my whole existence is committed". Surely, that is a very superficial observation. Or one may say, "To live in this way is natural, inevitable". Again, such a statement is very superficial. So, on the sensitivity of your mind depends the depth to which you understand the fact of what *is*.

Look, sirs, let us suppose that I have been trained from my youth to be a bureaucrat. I now function somewhat easily but mechanically in that profession—and I have been a slave to it for the past forty years. Most of us are in that position, and very few of us are aware of our slavery. A doctor who practises as a specialist, is a slave to his speciality; that is his haven, to which he has given many years of his life. We are

slaves to what we have been educated to do. We are slaves to our occupations, our professions. That is the actual fact; and the mind rebels against looking at the fact. If you observe your own mind, you will see how it wants to push the fact aside. Now, I am suggesting that you merely look at the fact, which is to be aware that you are a slave; and then you will find that such awareness, such perception, brings its own action.

But that raises another issue. Most of us, when we are confronted with a problem, want to do something about it. In other words, there is a thinker who acts upon the problem. But the thinker is himself the problem.

I wonder if I am making myself clear?

You see, sirs, I feel that freedom is absolutely necessary—not a conditional freedom, but a total freedom. For only a free mind is creative; only a free mind will know what love is; only a free mind is in that state of goodness which is not a cultivated virtue. So freedom is essential. But if you observe you will see that freedom is being denied to every human being through knowledge, through experience, through habit, through the various functions that we perform.

Now, is it possible for the mind to be free?—which is not the opposite of slavery. Do you understand? The opposite is always a reaction, is it not? The opposite of violence is non-violence. It is a reaction, therefore it has the quality of violence. But if the mind understands its own violence, then it is free of violence, which is a state entirely different from non-violence. Similarly, when the mind goes into this whole process of slavery, when it understands in what way and to what extent it is a slave, then there is no reaction, because that very understanding brings a freedom which is not the opposite of slavery.

Sirs, let me put the problem differently. Surely, love is not the opposite of hate. In love there is no jealousy, no competition. Where there is ambition,

there is no love; where the mind is seeking power, position, prestige, there is no love. One can comprehend the quality of love only through negation of what is called the positive. In other words, the state of love can be found, understood, felt, or that state is, only when the mind is not ambitious, no longer caught in the conflict of jealousy. And if we would understand what it is to be free, or to be in that state of perception which is freedom, then we must comprehend, we must be totally aware of the implications of slavery.

Sirs, I am afraid we are not in communion with each other. Do you know what it means to commune with another? Between two people who love each other, words are often unnecessary. When they look at each other, there is a common attention at that moment which is total; words are unnecessary, because there is instant communion at the same level, at the same time. Now, you and I are not in that state of communion, because you do not really see that this problem is your problem. It is not something I am imposing on you. I am merely pointing it out. Some of you may be aware of your slavery, but most of you don't want to look at it, so there is a separation, a cleavage; there is a distance between the speaker and yourself, because freedom to you means something entirely different. You translate it in your own terms, according to the tradition in which you were brought up, and thereby you completely miss the significance of what is being said. If there were communion between us with regard to the problem, then the mind would be in a state of attention all the time at its profoundest depth.

Do you understand what I mean?

Look, sirs: our lives are very petty, very narrow, full of strife and misery. Whatever we touch, with the hand or with the mind, is destroyed, perverted, corrupted. Everything about us indicates corruption. Being small, our minds are struggling, struggling, struggling all the time. To understand this problem,

you must give it your full attention; you must be earnest, not just at this moment, but right through life. I think there is a difference between earnestness and seriousness. A man with a conclusion, with a dogmatic belief, is very serious, and so is a man who is somewhat unbalanced. But I am talking about the earnestness of a mind which wants to penetrate as deeply as possible into every problem of life, and therefore cuts off all the escapes. Surely, to such a mind, this question of freedom and slavery is very important.

On every side, governments are destroying our freedom. Education is conditioning us, and so-called progress, with its mass-production, is also reducing us to slavery. Though you may not regard this as a problem, the problem exists. There are tyrannies in the world, dictators, rulers who are out to control the mind of man. This is a problem which is confronting each one of us every day. The question of how to interpret the *Gita*, or the *Upanishads*, is no problem at all. It is not a problem to an earnest mind. What somebody has said—whether it be Marx, or the Buddha, or the Christ—is not important. What is important is to understand for ourselves the things we are faced with, and not translate them in terms of the past; and that requires our attention, our complete earnestness.

This question of freedom is an immense problem that is actually confronting each one of us; it is not a mere theoretical problem to be discussed by the philosopher, or by the politician who is everlastingly talking about freedom and peace. It is a problem to the earnest mind that is seeking to disentangle itself from sorrow; but you cannot give your attention to it if you are not deeply aware of it, if it is not a direct challenge to you.

I do not know, sirs, if you realize in what a state of despair man is. He has tried everything; he has committed himself to various activities, to various movements, to various philosophies, reli-

gions, and at the end of it he has found nothing. He may believe, he may speculate, but that is all without understanding; so there is despair. Do you understand, sirs? There is despair when the mind sees the spread of tyranny, when it is aware that politics have become all-important, when it perceives that organized religion is controlling the thought of man. Turn where you will, you are bound to come upon this sense of despair. Those who have their backs to the wall invent philosophies, and by their cleverness capture other people in their net of despair.

So, being aware of this whole process which is life, as a human being you have to face it; you cannot say, "It is not my problem". It is your problem; and you can resolve the problem totally only when you begin to understand the quality, the movement, the extraordinary activity of your own mind. If you do not understand yourself, whatever you are, consciously or unconsciously you are in a state of despair; and the more intellectual you are, the deeper and wider is your despair. Of course, shallow minds very quickly forget their despair by going to the temple, or reading a book, or turning on the radio, or repeating certain futile words; but the despair is still there.

Now, can the mind confront this enormous problem without despair? Surely, despair arises only when the mind clings to the hope of resolving the problem. I think it is possible, without going through the process of hope and despair, to understand the problem—that is, to understand the mind, to understand oneself; but that is exactly what most of us do not want to do, because it entails work, it demands attention, a constant perception of every thought and every feeling. Yet without self-knowledge, do what you will, there can be no freedom. By self-knowledge I mean an awareness and understanding of every movement of thought and feeling from moment to moment. I am not referring to the higher self and the lower self, to the

*Atman*, the self that is supposed to be supreme, and all that business. I am talking about the mind that functions in everyday life, the mind that is enslaved, that is envious, ambitious, cruel, the mind that knows joy and sorrow, that is caught in a method, in a symbol, in an illusion. What matters is to understand your own mind, the mind that is functioning in you at every moment of the day, because only through the clarity of that understanding is there freedom. I say the mind can be totally free; and it is only the totally free mind that knows if there is reality, if there is God, a state which cannot be measured by the mind.

February 14, 1960

## II

### TALK IN NEW DELHI

Most of us must be aware that a fundamental change is necessary. We are confronted with so many problems, and there must be a different way—perhaps a totally different way—to approach all these problems. And it seems to me that unless we understand the inward nature of this change, mere reformation, a revolution on the surface, will have very little significance. What is necessary, surely, is not a superficial change, not a temporary adjustment or conformity to a new pattern, but rather a fundamental transformation of the mind—a change that will be total, not just partial.

To understand this problem of change, it is necessary, first of all, to understand the process of thinking and the nature of knowledge. Unless we go into this rather deeply, any change will have very little meaning, because merely to change on the surface is to perpetuate the very things we are trying to alter. All revolutions set out to change the relationship of man to man, to create a better society, a different way of living; but through the gradual process of time the very abuses which the revolution

was supposed to remove recur in another way with a different group of people, and the same old process goes on. We start out to change, to bring about a classless society, only to find that, through time, through the pressure of circumstances, a different group becomes the new upper class. The revolution is never radical, fundamental.

So, it seems to me that superficial reformation or adjustment is meaningless when we are confronted with so many problems; and to bring about a lasting and significant change, we must see what change implies. We do change superficially under the pressure of circumstances, through propaganda, through necessity, or through the desire to conform to a particular pattern. I think one must be aware of this. A new invention, a political reformation, a war, a social revolution, a system of discipline—these things do change the mind of man, but only on the surface. And the man who earnestly wants to find out what is implied in a fundamental change, must surely inquire into the whole process of thinking, that is, into the nature of the mind and knowledge.

So, if I may, I would like to talk over with you what is the mind, the nature of knowledge, and what it means to know; because, if we do not understand all that, I do not think there is any possibility of a new approach to our many problems, a new way of looking at life.

The lives of most of us are pretty ugly, sordid, miserable, petty. Our existence is a series of conflicts, contradictions, a process of struggle, pain, fleeting joy, momentary satisfaction. We are bound by so many adjustments, conformities, patterns, and there is never a moment of freedom, never a sense of complete being. There is always frustration, because there is always the seeking to fulfil. We have no tranquillity of mind, but are always tortured by various demands. So, to understand all these problems and go beyond them, it is surely necessary that we begin by understanding the

nature of knowledge and the process of the mind.

Knowledge implies a sense of accumulation, does it not? Knowledge can be acquired, and because of its nature, knowledge is always partial, it is never complete; therefore all action springing from knowledge is also partial, incomplete. I think we must see that very clearly.

I hesitate to go on, because, if we are to understand as we go along, we must commune with each other; and I am not sure there is any communion between us. Communion implies understanding not only the significance of the words, but also the meaning beyond the words, does it not? If your mind and the speaker's mind are moving together in understanding, with sensitivity, then there is a possibility of real communion with each other. But if you are merely listening to find out at the end of the talk what I mean by knowledge, then we are not in communion. You are merely waiting for a definition; and definitions, surely, are not the way of understanding.

So the question arises, what is understanding? What is the state of the mind that understands? When you say, "I understand", what do you mean by it? Understanding is not mere intellection, it is not the outcome of argumentation, it has nothing to do with acceptance, denial or conviction. On the contrary, acceptance, denial and conviction prevent understanding. To understand, surely, there must be a state of attention in which there is no sense of comparison or condemnation, no waiting for a further development of the thing we are talking about in order to agree or disagree. There is an abeyance or suspension of all opinion, of all sense of condemnation or comparison; you are just listening to find out. Your approach is one of inquiry, which means that you don't start from a conclusion; therefore you are in a state of attention, which is really listening.

Now, is it possible, in such a large crowd, to commune with each other? I

would like to go into this problem of knowledge, however difficult, because, if we can understand the problem of knowledge, then I think we shall be able to go beyond the mind; and in going beyond or transcending itself, the mind may be without limitation, that is, without effort, which places a limitation on consciousness. Unless we go beyond the mechanistic process of the mind, real creativeness is obviously impossible; and what is necessary, surely, is a mind that is creative, so that it is able to deal with all these multiplying problems. To understand what is knowledge and go beyond the partial, the limited, to experience that which is creative, requires, not just a moment of perception, but a continuous awareness, a continuous state of inquiry in which there is no conclusion—and this, after all, is intelligence.

So, if you are listening, not merely with your ears, but with a mind that really wishes to understand, a mind that has no authority, that does not start with a conclusion or a quotation, that has no desire to be proved right but is aware of these innumerable problems and sees the necessity of solving them directly—if that is the state of your mind, then I think we can commune with each other. Otherwise you will merely be left with a lot of words.

As I was saying, all knowledge is partial; and any action born of knowledge is also partial, and therefore contradictory. If you are at all aware of yourself, of your activities, of your motivations, of your thoughts and desires, you will know that you live in a state of self-contradiction: 'I want', and at the same time 'I do not want'; 'This I must do, that I must not do', and so on and so on. The mind is in a state of contradiction all the time. And the more acute the contradiction, the more confusion your action creates. That is, when there is a challenge which must be answered, which cannot be avoided, or from which you cannot escape, then, your mind being in a state of contradiction, the tension of having to

face that challenge forces an action; and such action produces further contradiction, further misery.

I do not know if it is clear to each one of us that we live in a state of contradiction. We talk about peace, and prepare for war. We talk about non-violence, and are fundamentally violent. We talk about being good, and we are not. We talk about love, and we are full of ambition, competitiveness, ruthless efficiency. So there is contradiction. The action which springs from that contradiction only brings about frustration and further contradiction. Knowledge being incomplete, any action born of that knowledge is bound to be contradictory. Our problem, then, is to find a source of action which is not partial—to discover it now, so as to create an immediate action which is total, and not say, "I will find it through some system, at some future time".

You see, sirs, all thought is partial, it can never be total. Thought is the response of memory, and memory is always partial, because memory is the result of experience; so thought is the reaction of a mind which is conditioned by experience. All thinking, all experience, all knowledge is inevitably partial; therefore thought cannot solve the many problems that we have. You may try to reason logically, sanely about these many problems; but if you observe your own mind you will see that your thinking is conditioned by your circumstances, by the culture in which you were born, by the food you eat, by the climate you live in, by the newspapers you read, by the pressures and influences of your daily life. You are conditioned as a Communist, or a Socialist, as a Hindu, a Catholic, or what you will; you are conditioned to believe or not to believe. And because the mind is conditioned by its belief or non-belief, by its knowledge, by its experience, all thinking is partial. There is no thinking which is free.

So we must understand very clearly that our thinking is the response of memory; and memory is mechanistic.

Knowledge is ever incomplete, and all thinking born of knowledge is limited, partial, never free. So there is no freedom of thought. But we can begin to discover a freedom which is not a process of thought, and in which the mind is simply aware of all its conflicts and of all the influences impinging upon it.

I hope I am making myself clear.

After all, what is the aim of education as we have it now? It is to mould the mind according to necessity, is it not? Society at the present time needs a great many engineers, scientists, physicists, so through various forms of reward and compulsion the mind is influenced to conform to that demand; and this is what we call education. Though knowledge is necessary, and we cannot do without being educated, is it possible to have knowledge and not be a slave to it? Being aware of the partial nature of knowledge, is it possible not to allow the mind to be caught in knowledge, so that it is capable of total action, which is action not based on a thought, an idea?

Let me put it this way. Is there not a difference between knowledge and knowing? Knowledge, surely, is always of time, whereas knowing is not of time. Knowledge is from a source, from an accumulation, from a conclusion, while knowing is a movement. A mind that is constantly in the movement of knowing, learning, has no source from which it knows. Am I only making it more complicated?

Sirs, let us try another way. What do we mean by learning? Is there learning when you are merely accumulating knowledge, gathering information? That is one kind of learning, is it not? As a student of engineering, you study mathematics, and so on; you are learning, informing yourself about the subject. You are accumulating knowledge in order to use that knowledge in practical ways. Your learning is accumulative, additive. Now, when the mind is merely taking on, adding, acquiring, is it learning? Or is learning something entirely different? I say the additive

process which we now call learning, is not learning at all. It is merely a cultivation of memory, which becomes mechanical; and a mind which functions mechanically, like a machine, is not capable of learning. A machine is never capable of learning, except in the additive sense. Learning is something quite different, as I shall try to show you.

A mind that is learning never says, "I know", because knowledge is always partial, whereas learning is complete all the time. Learning does not mean starting with a certain amount of knowledge, and adding to it further knowledge. That is not learning at all; it is a purely mechanistic process. To me, learning is something entirely different. I am learning about myself from moment to moment, and the 'myself' is extraordinarily vital; it is living, moving, it has no beginning and no end. When I say, "I know myself", learning has come to an end in accumulated knowledge. Learning is never cumulative; it is a movement of knowing which has no beginning and no end.

Sirs, the problem is this: is it possible for the mind to free itself from this mechanistic accumulation called knowledge? And can one find that out through the process of thinking? Do you understand? You and I realize that we are conditioned. If you say, as some people do, that conditioning is inevitable, then there is no problem; you are a slave, and that is the end of it. But if you begin to ask yourself whether it is at all possible to break down this limitation, this conditioning, then there is a problem; so you will have to inquire into the whole process of thinking, will you not? If you merely say, "I must be aware of my conditioning, I must think about it, analyze it in order to understand and destroy it", then you are exercising force. Your thinking, your analyzing is still the result of your background; so through your thought you obviously cannot break down the conditioning of which it is a part.

Just see the problem first, don't ask what is the answer, the solution. The fact is that we are conditioned, and that all thought to understand this conditioning will always be partial; therefore there is never a total comprehension; and only in total comprehension of the whole process of thinking is there freedom. The difficulty is that we are always functioning within the field of the mind, which is the instrument of thought, reasonable or unreasonable; and as we have seen, thought is always partial. I am sorry to repeat that word, but we think that thought will solve our problems; and I wonder if it will?

To me, the mind is a total thing. It is the intellect; it is the emotions; it is the capacity to observe, distinguish; it is that centre of thought which says, "I will" and "I will not"; it is desire; it is fulfilment. It is the whole thing, not something intellectual apart from the emotional. We exercise thought as a means of resolving our problems. But thought is not the means of resolving any of our problems, because thought is the response of memory, and memory is the result of accumulated knowledge as experience. Realizing this, what is the mind to do? Do you understand the problem?

I am full of ambition, the desire for power, position, prestige, and I also feel that I must know what love is; so I am in a state of contradiction. A man who is after power, position, prestige, has no love at all, though he may talk about it; and any integration of the two is impossible, however much he may desire it. Love and power cannot join hands. So what is the mind to do? Thought, we see, will only create further contradictions, further misery. So, can the mind be aware of this problem without introducing thought into it at all? Do you understand, or am I talking Greek?

Sirs, let me put it in still another way. Has it ever happened to you—I am sure it has—that you suddenly perceive something, and in that moment of perception

you have no problems at all? The very moment you have perceived the problem, the problem has completely ceased. Do you understand, sirs? You have a problem, and you think about it, argue with it, worry over it, you exercise every means within the limits of your thought to understand it. Finally you say, "I can do no more". There is nobody to help you to understand, no *guru*, no book. You are left with the problem, and there is no way out. Having inquired into the problem to the full extent of your capacity, you leave it alone. Your mind is no longer worried, no longer tearing at the problem, no longer saying, "I must find an answer"; so it becomes quiet, does it not? And in that quietness you find the answer. Hasn't that sometimes happened to you? It is not an enormous thing. It happens to great mathematicians, scientists, and people experience it occasionally in everyday life. Which means what? The mind has exercised fully its capacity to think, and has come to the edge of all thought without having found an answer; therefore it becomes quiet—not through weariness, not through fatigue, not by saying, "I will be quiet and thereby find the answer". Having already done everything possible to find the answer, the mind becomes spontaneously quiet. There is an awareness without choice, without any demand, an awareness in which there is no anxiety; and in that state of mind there is perception. It is this perception alone that will resolve all our problems.

Again, let me put the problem differently. When we are concerned with the mind, we have to inquire into consciousness, have we not?, because the mind is consciousness. The mind is not only intellect, feeling, desire, frustration, fulfilment, despair, but also the totality of consciousness, which includes the unconscious. Most of us function superficially on the conscious level. When you go to the office day after day from 10 to 5, or whatever it is, year in

and year out, with a terrible sense of boredom, you are functioning automatically, like a machine, in the upper layers of consciousness, are you not? You have learnt a trade or a profession, and your conscious mind is functioning at that level, while below there is the unconscious mind. Consciousness is like a deep, wide, swift-flowing river. On the surface many things are happening, and there are many reflections; but that is obviously not the whole river. The river is a total thing, it includes what is below as well as what is above. It is the same with consciousness; but very few of us know what is taking place below. Most of us are satisfied if we can live fairly well, with some security and a little happiness on the surface. As long as we have a little food and shelter, a little *pūja*, little gods and little joys, our playing around on the surface is good enough for us. Because we are so easily satisfied, we never inquire into the depths; and perhaps the depths are stronger, more powerful, more urgent in their demands than what is happening on top. So there is a contradiction between what is transpiring on the surface, and what is going on below. Most of us are aware of this contradiction only when there is a crisis, because the surface mind has so completely adjusted itself to the environment. The surface mind has acquired the new Western culture, with its parliamentarianism, and all that business, but down below there is still the ancient residue, the racial instincts, the silent motivations that are constantly demanding, urging. These things are so deep down that we do not ordinarily feel them, and we do not inquire into them because we have no time. Hints of them are often projected into the conscious mind as dreams—which I am not going into for the time being.

So, the mind is that whole thing, but most of us are content to do no more than function on the surface. It is only in moments of great crisis that we are aware of this deep contradiction within ourselves; and then we want to escape

from it, so we go to the temple, to a *guru*, or we turn on the radio, or do something else. All escapes, whether through God or through the radio, are fundamentally the same.

There is, then, a contradiction in consciousness; and any effort to resolve that contradiction, or to escape from it, places a further limitation on consciousness.

Sirs, I am talking about the same thing all the time in different ways. We are concerned with the mind, and how the mind, being educated in knowledge, in the partial, is to be aware of the total; because only when the mind is aware of the total is there a comprehension in which the problem ceases.

Am I explaining it sufficiently clearly, so that we can proceed without further labouring the point?

All thinking is limited, because thinking is the response of memory—memory as experience, memory as the accumulation of knowledge—and it is mechanistic. Being mechanistic, thinking will not solve our problems. This does not mean that we must stop thinking. But an altogether new factor is necessary. We have tried various methods and systems, various ways—the Congress way, the Socialist way, the religious way—and they have all failed. Man is still in misery, he is still groping, seeking in the torture of despair, and there is seemingly no end to his sorrow. So there must be a totally new factor which is not recognizable by the mind. Do you follow?

You don't understand, sirs, so please don't nod your heads.

Surely, the mind is the instrument of recognition, and anything that the mind recognizes is already known; therefore it is not the new. It is still within the field of thought, of memory, and hence mechanistic. So the mind must be in a state where it perceives without the process of recognition.

Now, what is that state? It has nothing to do with thought; it has nothing to do with recognition. Recognition and thought are mechanistic. It is, if I may

put it this way, a state of perception and nothing else—that is, a state of *being*.

Am I only complicating it further?

Look, sirs: most of us are petty people, with very shallow minds; and the thinking of a narrow, shallow mind can only lead to further misery. A shallow mind cannot make itself deep; it will always be shallow, petty, envious. What it can do is to realize the fact that it is shallow, and not make an effort to alter it. The mind sees that it is conditioned, and has no urge to change that conditioning, because it understands that any compulsion to change is the result of knowledge, which is partial; therefore it is in a state of perception. It is perceiving what *is*. But generally what happens? Being envious, the mind exercises thought to get rid of envy, thereby creating the opposite as non-envy; but it is still within the field of thought. Now, if the mind perceives the state of envy without condemning or accepting it, and without introducing the desire to change, then it is in a state of perception; and that very perception brings about a new movement, a new element, a totally different quality of being.

You see, sirs, words, explanations and symbols are one thing, and *being* is something entirely different. Here we are not concerned with words, we are concerned with being—being what we actually are, not dreaming of ourselves as spiritual entities, the *Atman* and all that nonsense, which is still within the field of thought, and therefore partial. What matters is being what you are—envious—and perceiving that totally; and you can perceive it totally only when there is no movement of thought at all. The mind is the movement of thought—and it is also the state in which there is complete perception, without the movement of thought. Only that state of perception can bring about a radical change in the ways of our thinking; and then thinking will not be mechanistic.

So, what we are concerned with is, surely, to be aware of this whole process of the mind, with its limitations, and not

make an effort to remove those limitations; to see completely, totally what *is*. You cannot see totally what *is* unless all thinking is in abeyance. In that state of awareness there is no choice, and only that state can resolve our problems.

*February 17, 1960*

### III

#### TALK IN NEW DELHI

If I may, I would like to think aloud about the 'what to do', not only in the present but also in the future, and to consider with you the whole significance of action. But before going into that, I think we must be very clear that I am not trying to persuade you to take any particular form of action, to do this or to do that; for all persuasion, which is propaganda, whether it be considered good or bad, is essentially destructive. So let us keep very clearly in mind that you and I are thinking out the problem together, and that we are not concerned with any particular form of action, either with what to do tomorrow, or with what to do today; but if we can understand the total implication of action, then perhaps we shall be able to work out the details.

Without understanding comprehensively the full significance of action, merely to be concerned with a particular form of action seems to me very destructive. Surely, if we are concerned only with the part and not with the whole, then all action is destructive action. But if we can understand action as a total thing, if we can feel our way into it and capture its significance, then that understanding of total action will bring about right action in the particular. It is like looking at a tree. The tree is not just the leaf, the branch, the flower, the fruit, the trunk, or the root. It is a total thing. To feel the beauty of a tree is to be aware of its wholeness—the extraordinary shape of it, the depth of

its shadow, the flutter of its leaves in the wind. Unless we have the feeling of the whole tree, merely looking at a single leaf will mean very little. But if we have the feeling of the whole tree, then every leaf, every twig has meaning, and we are sensitive to it. After all, to be sensitive to the beauty of something is to perceive the totality of it. The mind that is thinking in terms of a part can never perceive the whole. In the whole the part is contained, but the part will never make up the whole, the total.

In the same way, let us see if we can rather diligently and with a sense of humility go into this whole question of what is action. Why does action create so much conflict? Why does action bring about a state of contradiction? And what is the totality of action? If we can sensitively and with hesitancy begin to understand the nature of total action, then perhaps we shall be able to come down to the particular.

But very few of us are sensitive—sensitive to the sunset, sensitive to a child in the street, sensitive to the beauty of a face, sensitive to an idea, to a noise, to everything in life. Surely, it is only a humble mind, a mind which does not deny or accept—it is only such a mind that is sensitive to the whole. The mind is not sensitive if it has no humility; and without humility there is no investigation, exploration, understanding. But humility is not a thing to be cultivated. Cultivated virtue is a horror, it is no longer a virtue. So, if we can, with that natural feeling of humility in which there is sensitivity, go into this whole question of action, then perhaps a great deal will be revealed of which we are now unaware.

You see, the difficulty with most of us is that we want a definition, a conclusion, an answer; we have an end in view. I think such an attitude prevents inquiry. And inquiry into action is necessary, surely, because all living is action. Action is not departmental, or partial; it is a total thing. Action is our relationship to everything: to people, to

nature, to ideas, to things. Life cannot be without action. Even though you retire to a monastery, or become a *sannyasi*, or a hermit in the Himalayas, you are still in action, because you are still in relationship.

And action, surely, is not a matter of right and wrong. It is only when action is partial, not total, that there is right and wrong.

Sirs, don't accept or deny this. We are going into it.

So-called right action belongs to the respectability of society; and society is always in a state of corruption. What it considers good, is partial; and what it considers evil, is also partial.

I do not know if you have ever considered energy. All life is energy, is it not? Thinking, feeling, hunger, lust, ambition, the desire to fulfil with its shadow of frustration and sorrow—all this is the process of energy. There is energy from a centre, and energy which has no centre. What we call action is always in the form of energy expanding from a centre—the centre being a bundle of ideas, knowledge, experiences, memories, conclusions, definitions and patterns of action; the 'I will' and 'I will not'. For most of us, action is from that centre—which is one of our basic problems.

And why is it that, however active we are—planning, writing, probing, exploring, creating new ideas, bringing about new inventions—the mind is in a state of constant deterioration? And if the mind is in a state of deterioration, then any action springing from that state is inevitably destructive. So, why is the mind always caught in this wave of deterioration?

I do not know if you have thought about this problem, or if you have examined your own mind. When you are very young, full of vitality, eagerness, innocence, there is a delight in everything; all the common things have meaning. But as you grow older your mind becomes dull, because it has been educated to accept life in terms of society

and to adjust itself to that pattern. We all know this. Very few of us ever stop to look in silence at a tree, or at the evening sky. Our minds are chattering, deteriorating all the time. Why? Why is there no innocence—not the cultivated innocence of a clever mind that wants to be innocent, but that state of innocence in which there is no denial or acceptance, and in which the mind just sees what *is*? In this state of innocence there is moving, unbounded energy. But we grow old in the pattern of society, with its ambitions, frustrations, joys, sorrows; our minds become more and more dull, and when old age comes upon us, we are destroyed. Why?

Now, we are not asking why in order to find an answer; but we shall find the truth when we examine the problem. The problem is never apart from the answer; the problem is the answer. If I examine the problem, if I am sympathetic, sensitive to the problem, if I look into it, explore it, I begin to understand it; and the understanding of the problem is the dissolution of the problem. But when the mind seeks an answer, it moves away from the problem—which is what most of us do. Then the answer is merely an escape from the problem, and therefore the problem pursues us. So, when we ask why, it is merely to inquire into the problem, which is to study the mind in movement.

Why is it that the minds of most of us are constantly in a state of decay? Any fine machine that is well oiled and highly tuned functions with a minimum of friction and does not soon wear out. But where there is friction, where there is conflict, struggle, there is deterioration. Conflict is deterioration; and it is because most of us are in a state of contradiction, which is conflict, that we are always caught in a wave of deterioration. And is it possible to live without this conflict, this deterioration? If you say conflict is natural, human, and therefore inevitable, there is no problem; you accept conflict, and go on deteriorating. But the moment you question it, there

is a problem into which you are beginning to inquire.

As we have seen, all life is action; living is action, thinking is action, and not-thinking is also action. And we also see that any action from a centre creates conflict. When the mind is tethered to a centre, naturally it is not free, it can move only within the limits of that centre.

Sirs, the function of these talks is not to enable you to gather new ideas—because I do not think new ideas ever fundamentally change man—but to point out the importance of observing your own minds. If you are constantly aware of the way you are thinking, the way you are feeling, the manner of your whole being, whatever it is, then that very observation is enough. Do you know what I mean? If you see and understand something totally, there is no real problem. It is like studying a map. Once you know where all the roads are and the distance to a particular village or town, then getting there is a secondary problem. But it requires that you do look at the map, that you study it with close attention. In the same way we should regard what we are discussing; because mere intellectual acceptance or denial of what is being said does not alter the fact that, for most of us, action springs from a centre to which we are committed, and is therefore productive of everlasting contradiction, conflict.

I wonder if we have ever considered why most human beings want to belong to something, why they want to commit themselves to something, or be part of something? There is in most of us this compulsion to belong to an organization or group, to follow a particular philosophy or pattern of action. Have you ever examined this compulsion in yourself? Are you at all aware of why it exists, why you have the desire to commit yourself to something? For example, you all think of yourselves as Indians, and you are committed to that idea. Why? Or you say you are a Christian, a

Buddhist, a Moslem, a Communist or, something else. Why? Why this urge to be committed to something—to a philosophy, to a discipline, to a belief? Is it not based on the desire to be secure? Please do not deny or accept it; just look at it. Belonging to something, committing yourself to something gives you an activity in which you feel safe, secure, because others are also taking part in that activity; it makes you feel that you are not in a state of isolation. So that is part of the centre from which you are acting.

As we can see if we observe, all our activity springs from a centre. As I pointed out just now, one is acting from a centre in committing oneself to a group, to a cause, to a belief or ideology; and there is also the centre of action which is knowledge—knowledge as experience, knowledge of what has been and of what one thinks will be.

I wonder if you are following this, not just the words, but are you actually seeing that you have committed yourself to something, and that from that commitment all your action springs? That commitment invariably creates contradiction, conflict, because you are limiting energy. Life is relationship, and relationship is action. There is no human being who is isolated. If he is isolated, he is dead; he is paralyzed within the fortress of his own ideas. As all relationship is action, and action is the movement of life, why is it necessary to have a centre from which to act? Do you follow, sirs, what I mean? I think it is important to understand this.

We generally act from an idea, do we not? Let us examine that a little bit. We act from an idea. First there is the idea, and then action in conformity with that idea; or rather, there is an effort to approximate action to the idea, or to bridge the gap between them—the idea being a reaction, a response from the background of experience, of knowledge, of tradition, and so on.

Now, we are asking ourselves, is it possible to act without an idea? Please,

it sounds quite crazy—but I am not at all sure that the man acting with an idea is not crazy, because he creates conflict; and that which is in conflict brings about its own destruction. When you have an idea from which you are acting, there is a contradiction, because the idea is separate from action. Your mind is in a state of conflict; and a mind in conflict is in the process of deterioration. And yet most of us spend our whole life approximating action to an idea, which is called the ideal.

So, if you examine it closely, you will see that the ideal is a factor of deterioration—which none of you are willing to see, because you have been trained from childhood to accept an ideal. But merely to deny the ideal, is still within the field of the opposites, and that also is action arising from an idea.

I do not know if you are following this. Surely, a mind that is pursuing an ideal, however noble or ridiculous, is actually pursuing its own projection. Such a mind is in contradiction with itself; and a mind in contradiction with itself is fundamentally in a state of deterioration.

Now, can you look at this fact quite dispassionately? Can you perceive the truth that a self-contradictory mind, a mind caught up in conflict, is in a state of deterioration? That is obviously a fact, though you may translate or explain it in different ways. And can the mind, having been trained to accept and approximate itself to an ideal, which creates conflict, a contradiction, see that it is in a state of deterioration? Can you look at that fact and perceive the truth of it?

Surely, all conflict, at any level, in any form, is destructive, whether it be conflict between people, between desires, or between ideas. And it is of the utmost importance that the mind, which has grown into the habit of conflict, should see the truth of this; because the liberating factor is the perception of what is true, and not the practice of what is true. Perceiving the truth is

one thing, and practising the truth is another. The practising of what is true will never liberate the mind from deterioration, because such a practice is a mechanical process in which action is approximating itself to an idea—which is the very cause of conflict. But if you perceive the truth that all conflict at any level is destructive, then quite a different process is taking place; then there is no centre from which you are acting according to an idea.

I do not know if we are meeting. I think it is very important for you and me to commune with each other about this matter, and understand it. Our education, our morality, our virtue, our seeking God, and all the rest of it, is based on effort, discipline, control, subjugation, which is a process of torturing oneself; and a mind that is tortured, distorted by discipline, corrupted by the effort to be or to become, cannot receive or understand that immense energy which is without effort, which has no beginning and no end.

So it is very important for each of us to perceive what is true. And what does it mean to perceive the truth of something? I wonder if you have ever seen anything without giving it a name? I wonder if you have ever watched a bird on the wing without saying that it is a parrot or a sparrow? I wonder if you have ever looked at a face without saying that it is your wife, or your friend, or your uncle? I wonder if you have ever observed yourself without attributing to yourself a quality, without saying, "I am an I.C.S., a big man", or, "I am a little man, and I must be something else"?

Surely, beauty, and the perception of beauty, is that state of mind in which there is a total absence or abnegation of the centre. When you see a beautiful mountain in all its majesty against the sky, for a moment the centre is driven away, and you are face to face with something tremendous, magnificent, which has no word. In that state there is a vast appreciation of what is beautiful.

It is a state of perception in which all meaning, all virtue, everything is. The mind perceives totally, and that is liberation, that is the very essence of intelligence.

But the mind cannot perceive totally if there is either acceptance or denial, either condemnation or identification. Do listen to what I am saying, not merely verbally, but give your heart to it so that you are listening with your whole being; for only then will you understand the significance of perception in the sense in which I am using the word. The mind that has not committed itself to any pattern of behaviour, to any political party, to any country, to any tradition, but is totally outside of all these things—it is only such a mind that can perceive what is true. It is not a question of how an unperceiving mind can learn to perceive; there is no practice, no method, no system by which to awaken perception. All that the mind can say is, "I do not perceive", full stop. If you know you are unperceiving, then the question is, why? Not that you are trying to find an answer, but you are giving your full attention; that is all. You are giving your full attention, which means that your mind is alive, open to everything.

So you begin to see that your mind is conditioned to ideals, conditioned to think, to act, to feel from a centre. Living in this way does create a state of contradiction, conflict, and such a mind inevitably deteriorates. Now, if you see that to be a fact, then the fact itself is sufficient. You know, having an opinion about a fact is very different from understanding a fact. The mind that understands a fact has no opinion about it: it is so. But a mind that has an opinion about a fact, will never understand the fact.

Take what is happening in this country: starvation, appalling poverty, complete degradation, the utter lack of human dignity. All the politicians belonging to the various parties say they want to solve these problems, and each

party has its own method, its own leaders who say, "We will solve these problems in our way". To them the system is much more important than the fact of starvation. They are committed to the system, and from that commitment they act. The party, the system being their centre of action, they are incapable of forgetting their ugly, corruptive ambitions and all the horrors which prevent the solution of the problem of starvation. If all of us get together and say, "Let us solve this problem", it can be solved. But we are nationalists, Europeans, Asiatics, Communists, capitalists, and so starvation goes on.

So, if we can look at the fact without the screen of what we are committed to, then the fact itself awakens the intelligence which will bring about right action. We cannot look at the fact with a mind that is committed to an ideal, and is therefore in conflict, in a state of corruption. To look at the fact, we must have no commitments, and then perception is intelligence; and intelligence will act in its own way, at the right time, with the right method.

So, we are concerned with action. When action is from a centre, energy is limited, and therefore in a state of contradiction. When action is without a centre, energy is limitless, unchanging, immortal; it is the movement of that reality which has no beginning and no end. What matters is to be aware of the centre without any choice, that is, simply to be aware of our commitments—our commitments to the political party, to knowledge, to experience, to desire—without any struggle, without any denial of what we are committed to. I assure you, just to be aware of the centre from which one is acting, has much more significance and is much more potent than the desire to get rid of or to modify it. You see, the mind which is not in a state of contradiction, is an innocent mind, because it does not have any sense of a centre. Surely, innocence is the quality of a mind in which the 'me', the self, the accumulative

factor is not; and only such a mind can receive that energy which has no beginning and no end, that extraordinary something, call it reality, God, or what you will—the name does not matter very much.

Our problem, then, is to understand how energy gets caught in a centre from which all action takes place, thereby creating contradiction and misery. The understanding of the problem is the resolution of the problem. And then you will find, as you go deeply into it, that there is action without an idea, an action which is born of perception; and the beauty of it is that it has no before or after; it is a timeless, immeasurable state.

*February 21, 1960*

## IV

### TALK IN NEW DELHI

If I may, I would like to think aloud with you about authority, fear, pleasure and love, and try to go into it all rather deeply and comprehensively. Perhaps in this process each one of us will be aware of his own fears and pleasures, and of what he calls love, so that together we can find out what is implied in these things, and whether it is at all possible to be free of fear. Because fear, of which one may be conscious or unconscious, is really a dreadful thing; it is most destructive, enervating, and leads to constant misery.

But before we go into that, I think we should be very clear in ourselves with regard to the approach we are going to take in examining these things. The approach is very important—how we look at a problem, how we understand it. Surely, true examination, true exploration, is possible only when we go beyond mere verbalization. If we are limited to words, we are not really capable of exploring, and words then prevent full comprehension.

So we must examine what we mean by the word, must we not? The word is only a symbol, it represents an object, or something which we think and feel. The word and the object are two different things, but for most of us the word unconsciously becomes the thing. A word like 'Hindu' or 'Moslem' is a symbol which represents in your mind a certain type of human being, and for you the word is not separate from the person; like his name, that word awakens in your mind an image of the person, with certain qualities and characteristics, and the word becomes the person.

Now, I think it is essential to understand that the word is not the thing. The word 'tree' is not the tree, it is only a symbol which conveys the idea of the tree. But for most of us, the word is the thing, and therefore the word has assumed great importance. We think in terms of words, of symbols; and I wonder if we ever think without words, without symbols?

If we are to examine this problem of fear and find out whether the mind is capable of being really free from fear—which means going most profoundly into the untrodden recesses of the mind where fear lurks—we must begin, it seems to me, by understanding that the word is not the thing. The word 'fear', or 'love', or 'authority', is not the thing it represents.

Most of us have an intense urge to follow, and either we are unaware of this urge, or we think it is natural, inevitable. In any case, it has become an extraordinary factor in our lives, and unless we are following something or somebody, we feel lost. We follow a *guru*, an ideal, a leader, or a political party, and this urge to follow is the basis of authority, is it not? "I do not know, but you know, so I will follow you. To me you are the embodiment of what I consider to be knowledge or wisdom, and therefore I follow you." Or I want power, position, prestige, political or religious, so I join the group which offers me these things, and follow its

leader, who is going to help me achieve what I want in the name of peace, and all the rest of it. So, unless we understand this urge—the urge to follow, to be right, to be successful, to achieve a result—we shall not understand fear; and the urge is different from the word.

Sirs, unless you really apply this to yourselves, you won't be able to penetrate very deeply into the problem of fear.

Now, how does one look at a fact about oneself? Have you at any time really faced a disturbing fact about yourself? Or have you denied it, covered it up, found excuses for it, run away from it? Have you ever said to yourself, "I am a liar", or, "I am quite a stupid person", without bringing into it extraneous excuses, justifications, or condemnations? To say to oneself, "This is what I am", and stop there—surely, that is facing the fact of what one is. But to most of us that is completely unacceptable, because we live in a state of idealization, romanticism, of trying to become something which we are not. So, to face a disturbing fact about ourselves becomes an extraordinarily difficult problem.

You know, we are living in a monstrously stupid society; and seeing a desperately poor man when you yourself have just put on a good suit of clothes, you must feel, if you are at all sensitive, a sense of guilt. And the more sensitive you are, the more acute is that feeling. Now, is it possible to be aware of that sense of guilt, to face the fact and see all its implications, and not look away, or try to do something about it? Because any action with regard to the fact is an avoidance of the understanding of the fact.

Please, this is important to understand. I do hope you are following it, and that I am making myself clear. Because, unless we are able to look at a fact, there is no possibility of that fact bringing about its own right action. You know, as we said this morning when a few of us were discussing, a material

has its own discipline. Do you understand? When you are working with a material, that material has its own discipline. You may make a pot but cannot paint a picture with clay. In the same way, if you do not understand the fact, but try instead to do something about it, you are introducing a factor which is not inherent in the fact. We will see it more clearly as we go along.

To most of us, following somebody or something—an ideal, a precept, a goal, a political or religious leader—has become very important. We follow thoughtlessly, and we never find out *why* we follow. Without looking at the fact, we say, "It is natural, it is human, it is inevitable to follow; it leads me to success. Besides, what would become of me if I did not follow somebody, or some ideal? I would be lost". Such explanations prevent us from looking simply at the fact that we follow. But if we do look at the fact that we follow, without justifying or condemning it, then the fact, which is the material, has its own discipline and its own action.

Sirs, I feel that the mind can be totally free from fear. And fear is a most destructive, corrupting element, is it not? I am merely stating it as a fact, not as a condemnation. When the mind is afraid, it is not capable of thinking clearly, feeling deeply; it is not capable of perception. It sets going various inhibitions, conflicts and destructive responses. If the mind is not really free from fear, then the urge to follow, which is the demand for authority, is established; therefore the mind becomes a slave to something—to a leader, to a political organization, to a religious belief, and so on.

Sirs, unless you are alertly observing your own minds, what is being said will sound very complicated and very difficult; but it is not. The real difficulty is that most of us are not at all sensitive. We live on the surface—going to the office, quarrelling over sex, pursuing the casual pleasures—and with that we are satisfied. But if we want to find out

how to free the mind from fear, we have got to understand this question of authority—authority at every level, whether it is the authority of the policeman who asks you to keep to the left, or the authority of the government, or the authority of the priest, or the authority of your own mind, which has accumulated experience and knowledge, and acts according to the dictates of that background. As long as the mind is a slave to authority, imposed or self-created, it is incapable of understanding the full depth of fear and being free of it.

Now, what is fear? Let us explore it a little bit. I am not talking of any one particular fear—fear of darkness, fear of losing one's job, fear of a snake, fear of tradition, of public opinion, fear of death, fear of pain, and so on. These fears are all in relation to some particular thing, are they not? But I am talking of fear in relation to everything, not in relation to just one particular thing. If we understand profoundly the central fact of fear, we can then be free of fear in relation to everything, and thereby bring about a mind that is intelligent.

Most people are afraid of death, are they not? And the older we grow, the more there is this nightmare of fear. I am not discussing death—we will talk about that some other time. But fear of the fact of death is not something that you can analyze and be free of. Do you understand what I mean?

I do not know if you have ever analyzed yourself, analyzed your own feelings and ideas. If you have, you will know what is implied in analysis—not the analysis done by a professional psychiatrist or psychologist, but self-analysis. In the process of analysing yourself, as you will have found if you have ever done it, there is always the analyzer and the analyzed, with the analyzer assuming a position of authority as the one who knows.

Is all this becoming rather complicated? I hope not. But if we would

understand this nightmare, this dark shadow of fear, I am afraid we have to go through all this. It isn't child's play to be free of fear; it's not just a matter of saying, "I won't be afraid". You have to observe and understand the extraordinary complications of the thing called fear; and I am only pointing out that analysis is not the way. I may analyze myself and see that I want to follow because, without following somebody or something, I am afraid that I shall go astray. But the fear of going astray is much stronger than the process of analysis, and after analyzing myself, I find that I am still afraid. So analysis, whether done by oneself or by another, merely maintains fear at a deeper or a different level. Analysis, then, is not the way to resolve fear.

Now, what is fear? Surely, fear is always within the field of time. I am afraid of dying—dying the next moment, or ten years later. The thought of tomorrow with its uncertainty, and the thought of yesterday with its pleasures and its pains, creates a web of fear. Sirs, have you ever noticed that you are not afraid of something with which you are instantly faced? If in going round a corner you suddenly meet a snake, the body responds immediately, it instinctively jumps away; there is no fear because there is no time to think. But the moment you begin to think, fear comes into being.

Most of us, surely, have experienced lying, not telling the truth—and we do it because we don't want to be found out, we don't want to expose ourselves to criticism; so fear is at the bottom of our inaccurate statement. That is, the mind foresees what it is going to be asked, and is prepared and willing to lie in order to cover up what it is afraid to acknowledge. If you observe yourself you will see that fear always, under all circumstances, involves time, yesterday and tomorrow—the thing that may happen tomorrow, or the thing that was done yesterday, which may be discovered and condemned at any moment.

So, fear is essentially a process of time.

Sirs, instead of taking notes, or memorizing words, I wish you would actually watch your own minds in operation. You are all afraid, aren't you? If you were not, you wouldn't be sitting here. I do not know if you have ever thought about it; but a really happy man is not afraid—not the man who is happy because he has a few things, but a supremely happy man who is inwardly rich with the eternal virtues, who never seeks God, never goes to a temple. But most of us, unfortunately, are not in that position. Most of us are afraid in one way or another, at a superficial level, or very deeply. And may I suggest that you look at your own fear, whether it is the fear of your boss, of your wife or husband, of public opinion, of losing your job or your health, of death, of not being one of the important ministers, or what you will. Just watch your own fear and you will see, if you observe very carefully, that it involves time—the feeling that you might not be or become something, that you must change and might not be able to, and so on. So time is the factor of fear: time as yesterday, today and tomorrow; time as the past functioning in the present and bringing about the future; time by the clock, as well as time inwardly, psychologically.

So, the mind can be free of fear only when it is capable of freeing itself from time—which is to see the fact, to face the fact, and not try to change the fact. Please, this is important to understand; because, if you can at the end of this talk get up with that sense of freedom from fear, then you will know what love is. Then you will know what joy is, and you will be a human being mature with dignity and clarity and character. Character is clarity. A mind that is afraid is never clear. That is why it is important to understand how to look at a fact, and to find out what makes the mind give to the fact the quality of time. The fact is you are afraid, and you see that fact; but you have introduced the quality of

time by saying, "I must change the fact, I must do something about it, I must be courageous". All such thinking introduces the factor of time, because change is in time. So, to look at a fact without explanations, justification, or condemnation, implies the cessation of time.

Do please listen to this. It is not complicated. It demands attention, and attention has its own discipline. You don't have to introduce a system of discipline. You know, sirs, what this world needs is not politicians, or more engineers, but free human beings. Engineers and scientists may be necessary, but it seems to me that what the world needs is human beings who are free, who are creative, who have no fear; and most of us are ridden with fear. If you can go profoundly into fear and really understand it, you will come out with innocence, so that your mind is clear. That is what we need, and that is why it is very important to understand how to look at a fact, how to look at your fear. That is the whole problem—not how to get rid of fear, not how to be courageous, not what to do about fear, but to be fully with the fact.

Sirs, you want to be fully, totally with the wave of pleasure, don't you? And you are. When you are in the moment of pleasure, there is no condemnation, no justification, no denial. There is no factor of time at the moment of experiencing pleasure; physically, sensually, your whole being vibrates with it. Isn't that so? When you are in the moment of experiencing, there is no time, is there? When you are intensely angry, or when you are full of lust, there is no time. Time comes in, thought comes in only after the moment of experiencing; and then you say, "By Jove, how nice", or, "How terrible". If it was nice, you want more of it; if it was terrible, fearful, you want to avoid it; therefore you begin to explain, to justify, to condemn, and these are the factors of time which prevent you from looking at the fact.

Now, have you ever faced fear? Please listen to the question carefully.

Have you ever looked at fear? Or, in the moment of being aware of fear, are you already in a state of flight from the fact? I will go into it a little bit, and you will see what I mean.

We name, we give a term to our various feelings, don't we? In saying, "I am angry", we have given a term, a name, a label to a particular feeling. Now, please watch your own minds very clearly. When you have a feeling, you name that feeling, you call it anger, lust, love, pleasure. Don't you? And this naming of the feeling is a process of intellection which prevents you from looking at the fact, that is, at the feeling.

You know, when you see a bird and say to yourself that it is a parrot, or a pigeon, or a crow, you are not looking at the bird. You have already ceased to look at the fact, because the word 'parrot', or 'pigeon', or 'crow' has come between you and the fact.

This is not some difficult intellectual feat, but a process of the mind that must be understood. If you would go into the problem of fear, or the problem of authority, or the problem of pleasure, or the problem of love, you must see that naming, giving a label, prevents you from looking at the fact. Do you understand?

You see a flower and you call it a rose, and the moment you have thus given it a name, your mind is distracted; you are not giving your full attention to the flower. So, naming, terming, verbalizing, symbolizing prevents total attention towards the fact. Right, sirs? Shall we go on? All right. We are continuing what we were talking about at the beginning. We are still asking ourselves if it is possible to be choicelessly aware of a fact; and the fact is fear.

Now, can the mind—which is addicted to symbols and whose very nature it is to verbalize—stop verbalizing, and look at the fact? Don't say, "How am I to do it?", but put the question to yourself. I have a feeling, and I call it fear. By giving it a name I have related it to the

past; so memory, the word, the symbol, is preventing me from looking at the fact. Now, can the mind, which in its very thought-process verbalizes, gives names, look at the fact without naming it? Do you understand? Sirs, you have to find this out for yourselves, I cannot tell you. If I tell you and you do it, you will be following, and you won't be free of fear. What matters is that you should be totally free of fear, and not be half-dead human beings—corrupt, miserable people who are everlastingly afraid of their own shadow.

To understand this problem of fear, you have to go into it most profoundly, because fear is not merely on the surface of the mind. Fear is not just being afraid of your neighbour, or of losing a job; it is much deeper than that, and to understand it requires deep penetration. To penetrate deeply you need a very sharp mind; and the mind is not made sharp by mere argumentation or avoidance. One has to go into the problem step by step, and that is why it is very important to comprehend this whole process of naming. When you name a whole group of people by calling them Moslems, or what you will, you have got rid of them, you don't have to look at them as individuals; so the name, the word has prevented you from being a human being in relationship with other human beings. In the same way, when you name a feeling, you are not looking at the feeling, you are not totally with the fact.

You see, sirs, where there is fear there is no love. Where there is fear, do what you will—go to all the temples in the world, follow all the *gurus*, repeat the *Gita* every day—, you will never find reality, you will never be happy, you will remain immature human beings. The problem is to comprehend fear, not how to get rid of fear. If you merely want to get rid of fear, then take a pill which will tranquilize you, and go to sleep. There are innumerable forms of escape from fear; but if you escape, run away, fear will follow you everlast-

ingly. To be fundamentally free of fear, you must understand this process of naming, and realize that the word is never the thing. The mind must be capable of separating the word from the feeling, and must not let the word interfere with direct perception of the feeling, which is the fact.

When you have gone so far, penetrated so deeply, you will discover there is buried in the unconscious, in the obscure recesses of the mind, a sense of complete loneliness, of isolation, which is the fundamental cause of fear. And again, if you avoid it, if you escape from it, saying it is too fearful, if you do not go into it without giving it a name, you will never go beyond it. The mind has to come face to face with the fact of complete inward loneliness, and not allow itself to do anything about that fact. That extraordinary thing called loneliness is the very essence of the self, the 'me', with all its chicaneries, its cunningness, its substitutions, its web of words in which the mind is caught. Only when the mind is capable of going beyond that ultimate loneliness, is there freedom—the absolute freedom from fear. And only then will you find out for yourself what is reality, that immeasurable energy which has no beginning and no end. As long as the mind spawns its own fears in terms of time, it is incapable of understanding that which is timeless.

February 24, 1960

## V

### TALK IN NEW DELHI

I would like this evening to talk about several things, especially about effort, discipline and meditation. But, unfortunately, most of us are satisfied with theories, we are not concerned with being. We would rather talk about compassion, than be compassionate. We would rather talk about goodness and explain why we are not good, than

flower in goodness. We are so easily satisfied with symbols, with ideals and cunning explanations which, when examined closely, are found to be mere words in the air.

I think it would be a great mistake if we now merely resorted to words and explanations, because what we are going to discuss is a rather complex issue. Our lives at present are very shallow, empty, and we are making a lot of noise philosophizing about that shallowness, that emptiness. We read books about it—books by well-known modern philosophers, or our own traditional books, the *Gita*, the *Upanishads*, and all the rest of it—and think we have understood the whole significance of life, with all its vastness, its beauty, its complexities. We think we are marvellously free when we have only read about freedom—which all indicates a childish sense of verbal satisfaction.

So I would like to suggest this evening that we try to uncover, if we can, some of the problems which confront us in our daily lives. We are concerned with effort, everyday effort—the ceaseless battle within ourselves, the struggle to be or not to be something, the effort involved in going to the office every day, the conflict in relationship, and the various other contradictions in our lives. To say that everyday effort does not concern us, that it is not part of a religious life, seems to me utterly wrong. So I think we must be concerned with effort, which we shall discuss presently.

There is also this whole problem of discipline—the discipline demanded by the Communists and by the various other political parties, the discipline that you impose upon yourself if you are lazy, the discipline of learning a technique, and the discipline insisted upon by the books, the teachers, the *gurus*. All that is part of our life.

And it is also part of our life, surely, to find out what is the state of the mind that contemplates, meditates. Without knowing for ourselves the quality of a mind that meditates, that is in a state of

contemplation, we miss an enormous part of life; because this contemplative state of mind is, in its very essence, sensitivity to beauty, sensitivity, not just to a part, but to the whole process of existence.

And we should be concerned with the whole of life, not just with a part, should we not? Politics deal only with a part; social revolution concerns itself only with a segment of the whole. In all our activities, whether bureaucratic, scientific, or what you will, we are concerned with the part and not with the whole. And if we do not understand the whole, we shall be in everlasting conflict with others and with ourselves. So it seems to me very important and most urgent that we should find out what is the quality of the mind that is in a state of meditation.

Now, we are not going to explore the so-called steps to meditation, because all practice is mechanical. We are not going to say what meditation is, and what it is not. First we have to understand the mind as a whole, and then we shall come upon or discover the nature of meditation; we shall find out whether a discipline is necessary or not, and what is true effort. All this will be clear if we can understand what is the way of thinking. Because that is really our problem, is it not?—how to think. Thinking is possible, surely, only when there is room in the mind for observation. We must have space to think. The mind must be wide open in order to function freely in thought. For a limited mind cannot think freely. A mind that is free can think freely, but not the other way around. When there is open space in the mind for observation, there is contemplation. But our minds are limited, tethered to various techniques and experiences, bound to knowledge, and our space for observation is very narrow. So it is very important, surely, to understand the nature of consciousness—not only the conscious mind, but also the unconscious, which is the world of symbols. Without understanding

this world of symbols, of words, of instincts, the mind is not free to observe, and therefore there is no space for contemplation.

If I may turn aside for a moment, I think it is important to understand what it means to listen, for then, perhaps, what is being said will have a meaning beyond the words. It seems to me that very few of us ever do listen. We do not know how to listen. I wonder if you have ever really listened to your child, to your wife or husband, or to a bird? I wonder if you have ever listened to the mind as it watches a sunset, or if you have read a poem with an attitude of listening? If we know how to listen, that very listening is an action in which the miracle of understanding takes place. If we know how to listen to what is being said, we shall discover whether it is true or false. And what is true, one does not have to accept: it is so. It is only when there is contention between the false and the false, that there is acceptance and rejection, agreement and disagreement.

So it is important to find out how to listen. You have certain ideas about discipline, about effort, about meditation; you have various images based upon the traditional or the modern approach, and upon the experiences which you have had; and all these, surely, prevent you from listening. When the mind is comparing what is being said with what is said in the *Gita*, the Bible, or by another person, there is no real listening. When there is comparison, there is no understanding at all, because a mind that is comparing ceases to see the fact.

So listening is quite an art—listening with your whole being. And you do listen in that way when you are tremendously interested in something. If it is a matter of getting more money, or becoming famous, you listen with all your being, don't you? When you hope to get something for yourself, you are so eager that you put all comparison aside. So you do listen when it is profitable to you—and you are probably listening in

that way now. But then, unfortunately, you will be listening in vain, because what is being said is not profitable to you; you are not going to make money out of it, either in this world or in the next. All you have to do is to find out, uncover, discover; and that requires, not only listening, but an attention which is not mere concentration.

Do you know the difference between attention and concentration? A concentrated mind is not an attentive mind, but a mind that is in the state of attention can concentrate. Attention is never exclusive, it includes everything. If you are attentive as you are listening to what is being said, you are also aware of the sound of the birds, of the noise on the road, of your own posture, your own gestures, as well as of the movements of your own mind. But if you are concentrating—which involves strain, exclusion—in order to pay attention, you will find that such concentration is not conducive to understanding. I am not going to go into all that at present.

What I want to convey is that the mind is the field of symbols, the field of memory, the field of knowledge; and as long as the mind remains within its own field, it cannot function in freedom. So it seems to me that meditation is the whole process of discovering and understanding for oneself the limitations placed upon consciousness by effort, by discipline, and through this process of meditation, giving the mind space to function widely, deeply, without the boundaries of its own anxieties and fears.

We have to begin, surely, by seeing that life is infinitely wide, that it has no beginning and no end. Life has a beginning and an end only when it is 'yours', that is, when you function from a centre. This centre is the 'you' that pursues pleasure, the 'you' that quarrels, that is ambitious, vain, stupid, the 'you' that was born and is going to die. The mind that functions from this centre is like a man who has carved out for himself a little space on the bank of a wide, deep-

flowing river, and for the rest of his life remains in this little space—which is what most of us do. In this little space we meet, in this little space we cultivate virtue, in this little space we are lustful, we are vain, and all the rest of it, and we never enter into the full stream of life. All our ambitions, ideals, disciplines, controls, adjustments are in this little haven which we call our life—and just beyond it is the real life, the life which is in constant movement, which has no beginning and no end.

Now, we have to see that life as a fact, and not regard it as a theory, or say, "It sounds awfully nice, but it is not practicable". We have got to contemplate, live it every day, otherwise we shall continue to be in a state of misery in which we now are. We are in a state of contradiction, we are confused, we are full of sorrow, inwardly poor; our joys are so empty, because we have separated ourselves from that extraordinary movement of life, and we have very little touch with it. This is not a poetic simile, and what is being said is not romantic sentimentalism. I am talking about a fact which we must directly experience in our everyday life, and not regard as something which we have to strive after. So we have to understand effort.

What is effort? I do not know if you have ever thought about it. We make constant effort, do we not? In the morning you feel lazy, but when the bell rings you make an effort and get out of bed. A little later you go to the office, where again you make effort. The schoolboy makes an effort to pass a beastly examination. There is the effort to be virtuous, the effort to control one's mind, the effort to adjust in relationship, the effort to achieve an aim, and so on. For most of us, life is a process of striving, striving—a ceaseless conflict. Why? Have you ever thought about it?

Surely, most of us make effort because we are afraid that if we don't we shall become more lazy, or lose our jobs, or stagnate. So at the back of effort there

is fear. Watch your own efforts, observe yourselves and you will see there is this fear of going to sleep—physically, mentally, inwardly—if you don't make effort. And we say that it is natural, that it is part of our existence to live like this. Everything around us makes effort. The tree has to make an effort to grow, and so on; therefore effort is inevitable. But let us go a little further into it and find out whether effort really is inevitable.

Effort implies conflict, does it not? If there were no conflict, would you make an effort? Do please consider this, go into it with me, because I want to uncover a state in which the mind functions without effort and in which it is much more alive, vastly more intelligent than a mind that makes effort. Effort implies, surely, a conflict within and without. Conflict arises because of a contradiction in oneself. If there were no self-contradiction, you would be what you are: stupid, petty, violent, envious. The discovery of what you are never creates a conflict. It is only when you want to change what you are into something else that there is self-contradiction and therefore conflict. Effort invariably implies duality, does it not?—the good and the bad, pleasure and pain, and all the rest of it. Duality is contradiction; and as long as the mind is in contradiction with itself, there must be conflict, which shows itself in effort. So our problem is not whether one can live without effort, but whether it is possible to eradicate totally this state of self-contradiction. That is one problem, which we shall come to a little later.

Now, what do we mean by discipline? From childhood we are disciplined to conform, to obey the elders, to follow tradition, to imitate an example, a hero, to adjust ourselves to the established pattern. And the pattern, the hero, the tradition, is always respectable—the respectable being that which is recognized as worth-while by society.

Please do follow this, because it is a description of your own life.

Every political or religious organization inevitably contains the seed of reaction, and you can see why. The leaders have a vested interest, they are somebodies in their organization or party, and they do not want it to be broken up. They are fulfilling their ambitions in the name of peace, in the name of brotherhood, and all the rest of the nonsense that they talk. So, religious and political organizations of every kind are invariably hotbeds of reaction. They want things to go on as they are, with only slight modifications.

Similarly, a mind which is organized, disciplined—discipline being suppression, conformity, imitation, fear—, whether in the political or so-called religious field, is a reactionary mind. It is afraid of change, it is anxious about new ideas setting in. But this does not mean that a disorganized mind is a free mind. If you oppose the organized mind with the disorganized mind, you will not understand what I am talking about. I am talking about only one thing, which is the organized mind, the disciplined mind—the mind that imitates, conforms, follows—, not its opposite. Such a mind inevitably invites fear, and therefore resists every form of change, transformation, revolution. I am not using the word 'revolution' in the economic, social, or political sense. Revolutions at that level are only partial, therefore they are not revolutions at all. Revolution cannot be partial, it is something total. It has nothing whatsoever to do with religious or political beliefs, or with economic upheavals. Revolution, which is always total, is in the mind, in the quality of thinking, in the quality of being.

Most of us have been disciplined, made to conform. If you belong to a political party, the whips, the leaders make you conform to the party line. If you criticize, out you go. It is the same with religious organizations, if you criticize the Pope, or Shankaracharya, or any of the big, influential religious leaders. So a disciplined mind resists

freedom, because its thought is organized to conform, to function within a pattern. A disciplined mind is incapable of inquiry, because it has not the space, the freedom to find out. Your inquiry about God within the framework of discipline, is no inquiry at all; it is just the muttering of tradition. But if you would find out whether or not there is reality, that energy which has no beginning and no end, which does not belong to any belief or organized religion—if you would find that out, then your mind must understand this process of being disciplined to conform. You will also have to understand why conflict exists between the thinker and the thought.

If you observe your own mind you will see that there is a conflict between the experiencer and the experienced, between the thinker and the thought. The thinker is the censor, the judge who says, "I must not be this, I must be that. That is pleasurable, and I must pursue it; this is painful, and I must avoid it". So there is a division between the thinker and the thought. This is an everyday fact which you know and accept, is it not? The thinker is always trying to dominate, to change the movement of thought; and this division with its conflict, you say is an inevitable part of existence.

Now, what we are concerned with is the total elimination of conflict; because a mind in conflict is a silly mind. It is like a machine that functions badly. It may be very clever in its conflict, it may produce great books, make eloquent speeches, write poems that reflect its struggle and tension, but it is not a mind that flowers in goodness; it flowers in contradiction and pain. So, we are concerned with the total elimination of conflict. It is only when the mind is free of conflict that it can be what it is; and then it is capable of an extraordinary sense of creation—which we will not go into at present.

As long as there is a thinker apart from thought, there is conflict. This division, with its conflict, you have

accepted as inevitable; but is it? You say, "That is my practical experience". But even though Shankara, Buddha and all the rest of them have said so, may I suggest that you put aside these authorities, as well as the authority of your own experience, and examine it.

Is there a thinker apart from thought? Or is there only thought, which creates the thinker? If there is no thought, there is obviously no thinker.

Please, sirs, this is not a verbal trick, it is not an argument for you to accept or reject. If you think in terms of acceptance or rejection, you are living in a false world. I am asking a question, which is: if there is no thought, where is the thinker? Because thought is fleeting, transient, in a constant state of flux, it demands a permanent entity; so thought creates the thinker. Don't you want everything to be permanent? Your job, your property, your bank account, your relationship with your wife or husband—don't you want these things to be permanent, lasting? You want your soul to continue in the hereafter; you want your way of thinking, your way of living, your comforts, your vanities, to go on everlastingly. So your thought creates a permanent entity which you say is the thinker, and you give to the thinker various qualities, calling it the *Atman*, the higher self, and all the rest of it. But it is all within the field of thought, and thought is time, because thought is the reaction of memory—memory as knowledge or experience.

So thought creates the thinker, the censor, the observer. And is it possible to think without the censor? Do you understand? Is it possible to observe without the observer? Don't agree or disagree, sirs. Please, you have to find out. One direct experience of your own is worth more than all the books put together. If you can find out for yourself what is true, you can burn all the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads*, the *Gita* and the Bible; they are not worth looking at.

Now, you have to find out directly for yourself whether it is possible to be in

that state of thinking without the thinker, experiencing without the experiencer. Please, sirs, it is not complicated. In the moment of your intense anger, is there an observer? It is only after the emotional upheaval has taken place that you say, "By Jove, I was angry". Then comes identification, and the condemnatory process begins; there is contradiction, conflict, an effort to conform to the pattern recognized by society as being respectable. Do you understand, sirs? The pattern is recognized as being respectable, otherwise you would not try to conform to it. And respectability is a horror, an ugly thing, because it opens the door to mediocrity.

So, our problem is to understand the state of the mind which is in meditation, because meditation is essential—but not the meditation that most people practise sitting in a room and repeating a lot of words, *that* is not meditation. Repetition merely puts the mind to sleep, and you can do that very easily by taking a tranquilizer. I know you will dislike what is being said, because you have found that your traditional repetition of certain words and names for ten minutes or so, gradually makes your mind quiet; but it has only gone to sleep, and that is what you call meditation. You also call it meditation when you solicit, pray, beg for something for yourself, for your country, for your party or for your family. You put forth the begging bowl of inward poverty and ask somebody to fill it. That is not meditation. Meditation is something entirely different, as you will see. The state of meditation is possible only when there is space in the mind for observation, and that space is denied to a mind which is suppressed, disciplined to conform to a pattern. A mind in the state of meditation, contemplation, is not striving to be anything.

Sirs, I am only trying to convey in different words what has been said previously. If you have not followed the talk for the last forty minutes or more, you won't understand what is being said now.

A mind in contemplation is free of symbols; it has no visions, because visions are projections of that background in which it has been conditioned. A mind in contemplation is no longer making effort, as effort is generally understood; therefore there is no observer, there is no censor. A mind in contemplation, which is the state of meditation, is completely silent; and that silence is not induced. You can discipline your mind to be silent, but that is merely conformity to a pattern in the hope of getting what you desire; therefore it is not silence. A mind in meditation is absolutely silent, and that silence is not projected, not wished for, not cultivated. That silence is from moment to moment, it has no continuity; therefore it cannot be practised, it cannot be developed, any more than you can develop humility. Do you understand? If you cultivate, develop humility, you are no longer humble; you don't know what humility means. Leave the cultivation of humility to the saints; to the leaders, who are full of vanity and therefore cultivate the opposite, hoping thereby to become still more respectable. The cultivation of virtue is effort in limitation; so this quality of silence is not something to be cultivated.

The mind in meditation is in a state where there is no movement of thought, and therefore no projection of the background in which it has lived. Only the mind which has understood all that we have been talking about—understood in the sense of having perceived the fact, not merely having accepted the words, the explanations, which are ashes—and is therefore completely silent with a silence that is not induced by breathing or any other trick: it is only such a mind that can know the immeasurable, the eternal, that which has no beginning and no end.

*February 28, 1960*

## VI

## TALK IN NEW DELHI

Before inquiring into revolution and religion, which is what I would like to talk about this evening, I think we should understand what we mean by learning. It is only when we look at facts as they actually are that we can learn about them. But most of us are incapable of looking at facts as they are, without trying to interpret or do something about them. When we are confronted with a fact, most of us approach it with prejudice, with a temperamental bias, with our particular knowledge or experience, whether it be scientific, bureaucratic, business, religious, or what you will; so we never do look at the fact. And it seems to me that we can learn about anything in life only when we cease to approach the fact with conclusions, ideas and opinions, for it is only then that the fact begins to reveal its own significance.

So I would suggest this evening that we approach the problem of religion and the problem of revolution with the intention of seeing, first of all, what the facts are, which means that we must look at them without our conditioning. This is going to be very difficult, because we are so heavily conditioned—conditioned as Hindus, as Moslems, as Christians, conditioned politically, technologically, and in other ways. But if we can put aside our various conditionings and look at the facts, then I think we shall be able to learn immeasurably.

This extraordinary movement which we call life is a thing to be learnt about, and in learning there is no beginning and no end. We cease to learn only when we approach life with our narrow prejudices and predilections. Life is vast, is it not? With all its beauty, its sorrows, miseries and contradictions, its poverty, degradation and fear, its anxieties, hopes and despairs, life is really immeasurable; and to understand all that, we must surely have a mind that is capable of

immeasurable comprehension. But unfortunately, most of us have no such comprehension, and when we are confronted with a vital problem, our response is always determined by our conditioning, by our prejudices, and so on.

So, this evening let us see if we cannot seriously, with full intent, put aside all that we know or think we know, all the things with which we are familiar, and look at the actual facts. Then, perhaps, we shall be able to learn; and learning is action. Action and learning are not separate. The movement of learning implies comprehension, seeing the significance of the problem—its width, its depth, its height. The very perception of the problem is action. Action and perception are not separate. But when we have an *idea* about the problem, the idea is separate from action, and then the further problem arises of how to approximate action to the idea. So, what matters is to look at the problem without fear, without anxiety, without our temperamental evaluations, for then we shall be able to learn; and that very movement of learning is action.

I think we should see this very clearly before we proceed; because we must act, we must bring about a tremendous revolution in our thinking, in our morality, in our relationships. There must obviously be a radical transformation, a total revolution in all the ways of our life. But we cannot be in that state of revolution if we do not see the fundamental fact that where there is understanding there is action. Action is not separate from understanding or perception. When I understand a problem, that very understanding includes action. When I perceive deeply, that very perception brings an action of itself. But if I merely speculate, if I have an idea about the problem, then the idea is separate from action, and the further problem arises of how to carry out the idea. So let us bear very clearly in mind that understanding is action, that understanding is not separate from action.

Now, what are the facts? One of the major facts is that, all over the world, the religious and political leaders are as confused as their followers. The religious leaders may say, "We are not confused. We have our faith, our belief; we know, we perceive what is true". But the religious leaders are Christians, or Hindus, or Moslems; their minds are shaped according to a pattern, conditioned by the culture in which they happen to have been brought up. Dislodge them from their conditioning, and they are completely lost. Each religious leader has a group of followers who accept his authority, and that authority is based on their mutual conditioning. No Hindu will follow the Pope, and no Catholic will follow a Hindu *guru*—though a Hindu who is disturbed, disillusioned, may take shelter in Christian authority, and *vice versa*.

So, like the political leaders, the religious leaders are fundamentally confused. They are all in a state of contradiction. Though the political leaders may talk about peace, world unity, and trot out all the rest of those easy words which they employ to exploit people, they are in confusion, in a state of contradiction. That is one fact. Another fact is that you who follow them are also confused. You choose your leaders out of your confusion, and those whom you choose out of your confusion are bound to be equally confused. The mind that is very clear in itself, that sees everything totally, in true proportion, does not follow and does not become a leader.

It is a major fact that we are all confused. Very few of us are aware of this total confusion—total in the sense that our whole being is confused. Most of us say, "We are only partially confused. There are areas in us which are very clear, and by means of this light we are trying to bring about the cessation of our partial confusion". But a confused mind can think only in terms of confusion. It may project ideas of clarity, but it is still confused; and where there is confusion, there is bound to be

deterioration. You may have better agricultural methods, rockets that will go to the moon, and all the rest of it, but inwardly there is a sense of deterioration. We have tried various methods of approach to the problem of existence, and they have all failed. Religion has failed, education has failed, and politics really make very little sense, because the politician always deals with the partial, never with the totality of man. The politician is concerned with the immediate, and not with the whole of time. So there is confusion and a sense of deterioration; there is unexpressed sorrow and immense, unfathomable despair.

I do not know if you are at all aware of this fact of despair, the feeling that there is no way out. Man has tried in various ways. He has tried knowledge, he has tried organized religion, he has tried various systems of philosophy; and after all this he has come to a blank wall, so there is a feeling of despair. Man has reached the end of his tether. I wonder if you are at all aware of this! Perhaps you know despair only in terms of your own life. There is despair when you want something very badly and cannot get it; there is despair when your wife or husband, your son or brother dies. If you are a little man who longs to be rich and famous, you may despair of ever achieving what you want. All this is part of a wider, deeper despair in which action has lost its meaning, in which temples, philosophies, *gurus* have ceased to have any significance. There is, of course, the world of entertainment, amusement, superficiality, the world of escape; but with that we do not have to deal, because those of us who are at all serious have already seen through it.

So, faced as we are with confusion, deterioration, with corruption and an overwhelming sense of despair, what do we do? Most of us turn to faith as a means of solving our problems—faith in religious authority, or faith in the authority of the State.

Do please follow all this, because we have to bring about a new quality of mind; a fundamental revolution, a deep mutation has to take place, and it cannot take place if we are not aware of all these facts.

As I was saying, being faced with the present crisis, most of us turn to faith—faith in the idea of God, or faith in the State, or faith in a future Utopia, a marvellous new world to be created by the Communists, the Socialists, the politicians. Faith is an extraordinary thing, if you observe it, because it indicates that we want to cling to something which has been created for us by a leader, by an expert, by the politician or the priest. That is, being confused, uncertain, in a state of despair, we want something to which we can cling; so either we turn to the revival of a dead religion, or we dream of creating a new state with the help of the politician, with the help of the economist, the scientist, and so on. By worshipping God through the priest, through an organized religion, or by working to bring about a so-called new society, we hope to have something on which we can rely to solve all our problems. So, faith invariably implies authority, does it not?—the authority which hope creates.

Do please follow this—not just the words, but, if you will, observe your own minds. Because, what is it we are doing this evening? We are trying to commune with each other. In thinking aloud, I am not moralizing—that is a terrible, an ugly thing to do. Nor am I laying down the law, which is another horror of the so-called leaders. We are trying to commune with each other about these difficulties. So you have to watch your own mind, you have to observe your own life, you have to be aware of your own conditioning. I am merely describing, and if you are satisfied with mere description, then what is being said will have very little meaning.

Now, most of us, when we are confused, in despair, want to follow someone, so we have faith in a leader, whether

religious or political. But when a confused, despairing mind follows another, it only creates greater misery, greater confusion. You choose a leader out of your confusion, so the leader himself is confused; therefore your following has no value at all. Seeing the truth of this, what is one to do?

Religion, as we know it, the religion to which we have been conditioned, is not the real solution, though real religion is the solution. Let us go into that. We see that, like our own lives, the world is in a state of chaotic misery, and we do not understand it; therefore we turn to religion in the hope of understanding life, in the hope of understanding truth, God, or what you will; and what happens? Religion, with all its superstitions, with its beliefs and sanctions, tells us that there is a God, that we must be this, we must not be that, and so on and so on. In other words, we are conditioned by the religion in which we have been brought up, or to which we turn in the hope of finding a solution. This conditioning is not a conscious process, it is generally unconscious; but the moment we become conscious of our conditioning, we see that religion, as it is, is not the answer.

Religion, as it is, is essentially based on ideas, on faith, on authority. A man who goes every day to the temple, who reads the *Gita*, the Bible, or the *Namaz*, who performs certain ceremonies, who everlastingly repeats certain words, the names of Krishna, Rama, this one or that, who wears the so-called sacred thread and aspires to go on some pilgrimage—him you consider a religious man. But surely, that is not religion. It is an ugly, dreadful, stupid thing. But most of us are caught in it and we cannot get out. To get out, to break through our conditioning requires a great deal of energy, which we do not have, because our energy goes into earning a livelihood and resisting any form of change. To change demands going against society, does it not? And if, in a Hindu society, you were not a

Hindu, or if you were not a Brahmin in a Brahmin society or a Christian in a Protestant or Catholic society, you might find it difficult to get a job.

So, one of our difficulties is that to bring about a revolution in oneself requires tremendous energy, which very few of us have; because energy, in this sense, implies perception. To see anything very clearly, you must give to it your whole attention; and you cannot give your whole attention if there is any shadow of fear—economic fear, or social fear, which is fear of public opinion. Being in a state of fear, we think of reality or God as something far away, unearthly, something which we have to struggle after, grope for—you know all the tricks we use to escape from the conflict of our daily life to something which we call peace, goodness, God. That is our actual state, is it not?

We see, then, that organized religion, with its superstitions, beliefs and dogmas, is not religion at all, and never has been. We have merely been educated, conditioned from childhood to accept these things as religion; so organized religion is actually a detriment to the discovery of what is the true religious life.

Then there is the organized revolution, which is supposed to bring about a new and marvellous state on earth—but which is actually a reactionary movement, because the people who organize it are themselves as conditioned as the priests. They are the Marxists, the Communists, the Socialists; they too belong to something, and they too have a pattern of thought and action to which they want you to conform.

Do you realize, sirs, what is happening in the world? Man is losing his freedom; and he is willing to lose his freedom in the hope of having a better economic society. Tyranny in the guise of Communism, or some other form of so-called socialism, is spreading; and you don't care, because you say, "At least my children will be better off than I am, and the poor will have something to

eat". You don't mind being slaves as long as you have food, clothing and shelter; so you live a very superficial life, and with that you are content. But man is not all on the surface, he is an extraordinarily complex entity; and without understanding this complex entity, merely to bring about a reformation on the surface has no meaning, because it will only create still more misery, still more confusion and slavery. Do please understand this. We are now in a world-wide crisis, and you cannot meet this crisis by saying that we must go back to Hinduism, or to Islam, or to Christianity. That is a silly answer, it is not a mature response.

Seeing the truth of all this, what is one to do? Please put that question to yourself. What is one to do? You cannot join any organized religion, you cannot belong to any social-reform group, to any political party, because they are all dealing only with the partial. There is no leader, religious or political, who is going to save you. By following a leader you may have bread; but you are not going to be satisfied with bread. You too are ambitious, you want power, position, prestige. To be free, you have to understand the whole complex entity which is yourself, and not accept the partial response of a political or religious leader.

So, what is one to do? Being in despair, being confused and in a state of misery, being appallingly apprehensive of both living and dying, what is one to do? I wonder if we have ever asked ourselves this question? We have all had minor challenges in our lives, with correspondingly minor responses. But this challenge is not a minor one. Do you understand what I mean? Seeing poverty, you say, "I must do something about it", and your action is then the minor response to a minor challenge. Or, being in despair, you turn to some hope which is again a minor response. We have all had these minor challenges and minor responses in our lives. And seeing the futility of all that, we are now

putting to ourselves the question, what is one to do? So this is a major challenge, to which we cannot respond in a minor way. Do you understand?

Sirs, we have lost our smile, we have lost our laughter, we no longer see beauty. Our world is split up into Indian and Chinese, capitalist and Communist, German and English, Russian and American, Hindu and Islamic. But the earth is ours, it does not belong to the Communists or the capitalists, to the Hindus or the Christians. It is our earth, yours and mine, to live upon, to enrich. The earth is wide and beautiful, a lovely thing to behold—and we have divided it. Through politics, through possessiveness, through ambition and religious bigotry, we have made it narrow. We think in terms of the North and the South, the East and the West, in terms of your country and my country, your property and my property; and we are all seeking power, position, prestige.

Now, when one sees all this horror, this misery, this degradation, corruption and violence, what is one to do? I think there is a total answer; and a total answer is necessary, because partial answers are no good any more. The *guru*, the so-called religious person says, "Seek God, and you will have all the answers". That is sheer nonsense, because you have got to live in this world. You can no longer run away to the Himalayas, or to a monastery, or lose yourself in the Cross, or the Crescent, or in any other symbol. Those days are over. You will have to find out for yourself what to do, because there is no escape. Reason cannot open the door to you any more; no amount of intellectual cunning will bring you quietness, peace, a sense of love. Intellect has become barren, and all that is born of intellect is sterile. You cannot rely on knowledge, you cannot rely on the *Gita*, on the Bible, or on any other book, because to rely on authority has no meaning. Do please realize this. You have relied on authority all your life,

and you are still miserable, ridden by fear, by anxiety, despair.

So, what is one to do? As I said, I think there is a total answer; but first we must be very clear that no partial answer can ever meet the total challenge. Through exclusive concentration on a part you can never understand the whole. The whole is the true. Life is not only joy, nor is it just the beauty of a sunset, or of the evening star, or of a bird on the wing. Life is also ugliness and despair, it is this fearful anxiety and frustration which we all know. So we have to put a question to ourselves that will awaken the total answer to the whole of this. Do you understand, sirs? If you ask, "What am I to do?" only because you have quarrelled with your boss, or your wife has run away, that is a very superficial question which will find a superficial answer. There is a complete answer to that and every other question only when we approach the problem totally—which is to understand our own immense loneliness and poverty of being. That is why we must be very clear as to the manner in which we are putting this question to ourselves.

If an answer is not total, it is no answer at all; and I say there is a total answer to all these problems. There is a complete way of looking at life, with all its problems, and that is with a mind that has understood itself. When there is no self-knowledge, no understanding of the ways of thought—not somebody else's thought, but your own—, then all your responses to the demands of life are bound to be partial, self-contradictory, and therefore productive of further misery. By self-knowledge I mean the understanding of yourself, the understanding of your own behaviour, your own motives, prejudices, fears. I do not mean your ideas about the *Atman*, the higher self, and all that business, which is still within the field of thought, within the field of your conditioning.

Now, knowledge is one thing, and knowing is another. Please, this may be a little difficult, but just follow it.

Knowledge is of time. Knowledge, being cumulative, is always partial; it has a beginning and an end. Knowledge, or accumulated experience, is memory; and the response of that memory is what we call thought—thought expressed in words, or thought without words. This whole process is knowledge.

Then there is the state or movement of knowing. A mind that is in the movement of knowing, learning, has no beginning and no end; it is timeless. So we have to be very clear about the difference between knowledge and knowing.

Knowledge is of time. I know, and I shall know more; I am violent, and I shall be non-violent. That implies an additive process in time. The man who says, "I know", is always within the field of time. But knowing is timeless. Do please comprehend this, otherwise you won't understand what follows.

All knowledge is within the field of time; so knowledge is not the answer. It is knowledge that has created the people who say, "We know, you don't know. We have heard the voice of God. We are the leaders, you follow us". Such people belong to time, which is knowledge; and knowledge is obviously not the way out of our mess.

Now, I think there is a movement of knowing, learning, which has nothing to do with time. When you are learning, there is no time, is there? In that movement there is no beginning and no end. You don't know: you are learning. I wonder if you see the difference! When you are in the movement of learning, there is no entity who is accumulating knowledge and thereby creating the differences of accumulation and the conflict between them.

Look, sirs: when you are learning, there is no time involved at all, is there? Because learning or knowing is infinite, it has no beginning and no end. In that same way, without any sense of accumulation, there must be the knowing of oneself. Words are extraordi-

narily difficult. I am knowing you, I am knowing myself. In knowing, there is never a moment of contradiction, never a moment of conflict. When the mind is in the movement of knowing, it has removed the source of conflict; and when you remove the source of conflict, you are then able to respond totally to life.

So, knowing about oneself is the beginning of freedom, because it brings about a mind which is not caught in time. The mind that has this quality of timelessness can answer all our human problems, because it is in a state of creation; and only such a mind is open to receive that which is not measurable by knowledge.

*March 2, 1960*

## VII

### TALK IN NEW DELHI

I would like this evening to talk about time and death; but it seems to me that it is important, first of all, to understand what we mean by listening. You are listening to what is being said, obviously; and what is being said is a challenge. But are you listening in order to find an answer, or are you listening to the challenge itself? I think there is a difference between listening to the challenge, and trying to find out how to respond to the challenge. Most of us, when we are confronted with a challenge, with a problem, immediately start looking for an answer, for a way out of the problem; so the problem is never important. For most of us, what is important is the solution; but the solution is in the problem, it is not away from the problem.

So, we must be very clear that we are not merely trying to find an answer, a solution, but are listening to the challenge, to the issues involved in time and death. If you are merely concerned with finding an answer, then I am afraid you will go away disappointed, because it is not the purpose of these talks to

provide answers. But what we are trying to do is to explore the problem together; and in any exploration, *how* one explores is of the highest importance. If you explore in order to find an answer, then your exploration becomes merely a means to an end, and therefore exploration has no value in itself. The moment your attention is diverted to finding a solution for the problem, exploration and discovery cease to have very much significance.

Please do listen to this a little attentively, if you will. When we are faced with a problem, the immediate reaction of most of us is to try to slip out of it; we want to find an answer, and we say, "What shall I do?" But time and death are an immense problem, are they not? They are an extraordinarily complex problem, in which there is a sense of magnificence, a certain splendour and beauty. But if we do not appreciate, or are not sensitive to the problem, merely to seek a solution is so empty, a routine matter that has very little significance.

So, it matters very much how you are listening. As I said, there is a great difference between listening to find an answer, and listening to the problem, to the challenge itself. If you are looking for an answer, your mind is distracted; but if you are trying to understand the problem, then your whole mind is giving attention to it; and surely that is the way you must inquire into time and death, because these two factors play an extraordinarily important part in our lives. But whether you seek a solution, or give your full attention to the challenge, depends entirely on yourself.

When someone whom you love dies and you are enveloped in a cloud of sorrow, your only concern is to find a way of being free from this grief, from this burden of tears; you are generally not interested in understanding the extraordinary thing called death. Isn't that so? And there is this problem of time, in which each one of us is involved—not only chronological time, but also

inward time, the psychological sense of time that is developed by a mind which says, "I was, I am, and I shall be". All of us are concerned with time in one way or another. There is the necessity of catching a train, of arranging for what one will do or where one will go tomorrow. Time is also involved in the cultivation of a virtue—which of course is totally absurd—in fulfilling an ambition, in trying to think out a problem, and so on.

Now, to understand time, you have to understand the operations of the mind as a whole; and in that understanding you will perceive the altogetherness of time.

Sirs, may I point out that you are not only listening to my words. Words are mere symbols, they have very little meaning in themselves. You are also observing your own mind—or rather, the mind is observing itself, which means that it is aware of how it is listening to what is being said. Please, I am labouring this point because, if we do not lay the right foundation, our structure will be superficial and very shoddy. But if we know how to lay the foundation deeply, rightly, then we can build truly. What we are trying to do now is to lay the right foundation, so that the process of inquiry will be right; and that inquiry depends on you, not on me. In listening to these words, you have to be aware of all the operations of your own mind. I am using words to describe the operations of the mind; but if you hear only the words and do not listen to the mind itself in operation, then the words will convey very little.

The altogetherness of time is the active present. A verb is in its essence the active present, is it not? The verb 'to be' includes 'has been', 'being', and 'will be'—that which was, that which is, and that which is to be. But most of us are concerned with the progression of what has been, through what is, to what will be. That is our life, and we are functioning, acting in

those terms: the past flowering in and being modified by the present, thereby creating the future. Our action, which is already determined by yesterday, is modified by today and shapes what will be tomorrow. In other words, for most of us the cause and the effect are separated by an interval, a gap in which the cause inexorably becomes the effect, and which by Indians is generally called karma.

Now, if you examine very closely this chain of cause-and-effect, you will find that our action is not so completely dependent on the original cause, but may arise from something entirely different. That is, a mango seed will always produce a mango tree, never a palm or a tamarind. The cause is fixed in the very nature of the mango seed, and it produces a fixed effect. It cannot do otherwise than produce a mango tree. But with us the situation is quite different, because what was an effect becomes a cause which is constantly being modified in the present through various influences, and may therefore produce an effect entirely different from the original cause. So, with human beings the cause is never fixed, it is always undergoing a change, and that change is reflected in future action. The understanding of this fact is the total comprehension of action.

Time, for most of us, is this progression of the past through the present to the future, the feeling that I have been and that I am; and because I have been and I am, I shall be. In this field of time we function.

Now, time is knowledge, is it not? Yesterday I did, or thought, or experienced such and such a thing, and with the knowledge of what I did, or thought, or experienced I meet the present challenge: the anger of my wife or husband, the condemnation of the political bosses, or whatever it is. I live in the present with what I have known; and the known in response to the present challenge, creates the future. So the mind is always working within the

field of time, within the field of the modified known. The possibility of functioning beyond time is merely a theory, a matter of faith or belief, which is itself a projection of the known within the field of time. That is one aspect of it.

Then there is the aspect of time which the mind creates as memory. Every experience that you have, however small or great, however petty or magnificent, takes root in the soil of the mind as memory, does it not? The mind becomes the soil in which experience takes root.

I do hope you are following all this so that, at the end of the talk or even now, we can all feel the extraordinary quality of time and death. To a mind that understands, that is not afraid, death must be something astonishing, colossal; it must be as magnificent, as beautiful as life is. But, you see, we do not know what death is; it is the unknown, and therefore it becomes something to be thought about, to be speculated upon. Sirs, as long as the mind does not understand its own operations, death will have very little meaning.

So it is very important for each one of us to go through this process of inquiry, not theoretically, but actually, so that the mind comes out of it with a clarity of perception. Most of us are asleep and tortured by the nightmare of our own demands, urges, compulsions, ambitions. We are always functioning within that field of tyranny, of conflict, which is the field of all the things that we go through every day. And the problem, the challenge is: can the mind really disentangle itself from the known and be in a state to receive the unknown, which is death? Do you understand, sirs?

For most of us, death is despair. Death is finality, which is a terrible thing for a man who is full of vitality, who is ambitious, creative, who is working, acquiring, doing. At the end of all this—death. What for? And being full of despair, such a man invents

a philosophy or turns to a belief—belief in resurrection, or in reincarnation—that satisfies him, gives him hope.

As I was saying, every experience that you have takes root in the mind as memory. If I flatter you, or insult you, that experience takes root in your mind, does it not? You never forget it. So the mind has become the soil in which experiences, thoughts continually take root—the mind being the unconscious as well as the conscious—and from that background of memory, of accumulated thought and experience, we act, we think, we are. That background is the factor of the known, it is the creator of the known. I wonder if you are following this?

Look, sirs: you go to the office every day because you have learnt a certain technique by which you earn your livelihood. That technique has become a mechanical memory. You know what to do and how to do it, and from that background you act, from that background you are. So what you are and what you do is essentially mechanical, repetitious, with little modifications here and there. It is the same with almost all of us. Experience as knowledge has taken root in the mind, and we function always within the field of the known; or from the known we create the opposite and act from that opposite, which is still within the field of the known, the field of time.

So, there is time as yesterday, today and tomorrow; and time as memory, which is the factor of the known. Time is the verb 'to be': that which has been, that which is, and that which will be. Now, if you consider that verb, you will see that the state it represents, while embracing what has been, what is and what will be, is always actively present. Similarly, there is only a state of mind which is actively present, though we translate it as yesterday, today and tomorrow.

Now, the problem, the challenge is this: is it possible for the mind which is aware of this whole process of time,

which has explored and understood it, to grasp the significance of death? Death is the unknown, it is not merely the disintegration of the body; and our fear of death is the fear of there being no continuity, which is naturally the psychological reaction of memory, whose urge is to continue in time. Let me put it differently.

What is it about death we are afraid of? Essentially it is fear of not being, isn't it? I have been, and I am; but when death comes, I may cease to be. That is what I am afraid of, because I want to continue. Though different names are given to it by different people, to continue in one form or another is the urge of everyone; and continuity is always within the field of time. Without time, without memory, there is no continuity as 'I was' and 'I will be'. But the factor of fear comes in when there is any doubt about this continuity of being, and so the mind begins to invent or cling to comforting theories, which it then tries to bolster up by saying, "There is a great deal of evidence for human continuity after death", and so on and so on.

Thought is continuity; thought is time. There is no thinking, no verbalizing without memory. Memory functions essentially within the field of time, and therefore memory is mechanical. If I ask you something with which you are thoroughly familiar, you respond immediately. But if the question is more complex, you take a little more time; there is an interval between the challenge and the response. In that interval the mind is in operation, searching the corridors of memory, or thinking out what the answer should be. So, thinking has continuity.

Sirs, this is really important, and if you will, please go into it a little bit with me. Let us take the journey into it together; because, if we do not understand the process of thinking, we shall not know what it is to die. To most of us, death is a finality to be feared, because we want to continue. But if

we can investigate and understand the whole process of thinking, then death is not a fearsome finality because there is no longer any sense of wanting to continue. We will go into it, think it out together.

Factually, what are you? Please do not respond theoretically, saying that you are the *Atman*, that you are a son of God, and all the rest of it. Factually, what are you? You are the result of your environmental influences, are you not? You are the result of the culture, the education, the social environment in which you were brought up. I know you don't like to think that, but it is a fact. You like to think of yourself as an extraordinary spiritual entity who is not influenceable. But the fact is that you are what you have been taught. You are the embodiment of tradition, of superstition. You are the entity who has learnt a technique and who functions like a machine in a certain pattern of action. You are sorrowful, you are lustful, you are seeking power. All that is what you actually are, and on top of it you superimpose the concept of an extraordinary spiritual state which is still the result of the culture in which you were brought up, whether it be Hindu, Buddhist, Moslem, Christian, or what you will.

Now, essentially you want that bundle of conditioning to continue, with little modifications here and there. You don't want too much sorrow, you don't want to be in a constant battle with yourself, you would like to have a little more peace; but you want to continue in essence as you are. What you are is thought—thought being the result of accumulated experiences, which is memory. You function from the background of the known, and that background is what you want to continue. Therefore death is to you a finality, a fearful door to go through, so you say to yourself, "There must be some form of continuity".

Now, that which has continuity is mechanical. Sirs, do please listen to

this. That which has continuity is mechanical. If you know how to oil it properly, a machine will continue running for a very long time. If you can create a machine without friction, it will continue to function indefinitely, as the satellites are doing. But it will be entirely mechanical. And you are frightened of not continuing to function in this mechanical sense. I think you are frightened because that is all you know: how to function mechanically in time. The idea of ceasing to function mechanically, in a world you do not know, which is death, is frightening to you; and being frightened, you say that there must be reincarnation, or some other form of continuity—you know all the speculative, hopeful theories which the mind invents.

Please bear in mind that we are not discussing whether there is a form of continuity or not. That is totally irrelevant. It is a stupid mind that says, "I must continue"; and it will remain stupid. It may continue, but it will still be mechanical.

So, our problem, surely, is this: is it inevitable that we function within the field of time, within the field of the known? And is it possible to die to the known? Is it possible to die to one's pleasure? We all want to die to our pains. But is it possible to die to one's pleasure? Is it possible to die to everything that one has known, so that the mind is not merely a machine? Do you follow?

That which has continuity functions in time as yesterday, today and tomorrow. It is being modified each minute, but it has a continuity; and whatever has a continuity is mechanical, therefore it cannot be creative. A machine can never be creative. These electronic brains can function with incredible speed, but they cannot invent, they can never be in a state of creation. For most of us, life is machine-like, one long series of mechanical actions, and therefore we are bored with it; and from this terrible routine of existence we seek

to escape through God, through going to temples, churches, through turning on the radio and pursuing every other form of distraction.

As I said at the beginning of the talk, we are not seeking an answer, because in serious matters life has no answer. Life, which is vast and profound, has little ripples which cause disturbances, and from these superficial disturbances we try to escape through an answer. If you are seeking an answer because you are disturbed, you may think about God, you may play games with the idea of truth, eternity; but your mind will still be shallow, stupid, petty. So, is it possible to die to the things one has known, the things the mind is rooted in? If one can, then there is only a state of dying, and not the finality of death.

Sirs, through human endeavour, human continuity, the mind has become mechanical. We are not even fully operative machines, but half-dead machines; our brains are functioning at only twenty-five per cent of capacity, or not even that. We are not functioning totally, wholly. We are caught between the Communist with his Marxist theories, and the so-called religious person, with his beliefs, with his dogmas, and we are creating a monstrous world. Though every politician has on his tongue that word 'peace', his actions and his very existence deny it. We are living in a terrible world, and we need a new mind—not an old mind modified, but a totally new mind. And you cannot have a new mind, a mind that is young, innocent, fresh, as long as there is any desire for continuity.

So, is it possible to die to the whole of yesterday? Please listen to this. It is not my problem, it is your problem. Can you die to the whole of yesterday? Now, that is a challenge, isn't it? And are you listening to the challenge—or listening to find out how to die to yesterday? The miseries, the pleasures, the fleeting joys, the routine, the ugly brutality of your existence, the appalling

shallowness of your thinking—can you die to all that? If you are listening to find out how to die, trying to decide how much to keep and how much to discard, then you won't find an answer. But if you are listening to the challenge, then that very listening is the experiencing of dying.

As I said, we need a new mind, because the old mind has created terrible problems for which it has no answers. Whatever it reforms creates another misery; whatever it builds produces another shadow, a further conflict. So, a fresh mind is essential if we are to create a new generation, a different world.

Now, can your mind die to everything it has known—known in terms of continuity, or ambition? Can you die to all that—and not ask what will happen if you die to it? To ask what will happen, is not to listen to the challenge, but only to seek an answer to the problem with which you are confronted. The challenge is: can you die to your ambition, to your corruption, to your envy, to your acquisitiveness? And if you listen to the challenge, then that very act of listening is the experiencing of dying to that which has continuity.

Don't you see, sirs? You need an innocent mind, a fresh mind, a mind which is not cluttered up with the known. An innocent mind is a mind which functions in the unknown; and dying to the known is the door to the unknown. The unknown is not measurable by the known. Time cannot measure the timeless, the eternal, that immensity which has no beginning and no end. But our minds are bound to the yardstick of yesterday, today and tomorrow, and with that yardstick we try to inquire into the unknown, to measure that which is not measurable. And when we try to measure something which is not measurable, we only get caught in words.

So it is only a mind that has listened to and understood the challenge of death—it is only such a mind that can die to its own miseries, and therefore be in a state of innocence; and from that

state of innocence there is a totally different action altogether. Such action is always in the present; it is the active present. An innocent mind does not think in terms of having been something yesterday, which it is modifying today in order to gain something tomorrow. I feel it is urgently important for each one of us to find this out for himself. Because, as we are now, we are creating a dreadful world for the generations to come. We cannot bring into being a new generation unless we ourselves die to the old. As long as the mind lives and functions within the field of time, do what it will—go to innumerable temples, worship strange gods, repeat every kind of prayer, perform sacrifices, mumble a lot of words—, it can never know that which is eternal, immeasurable. Only the mind that lives completely in the silence of the active present, is open to receive the unknowable; and it is only such a mind that can bring about a new world, because only such a mind is in a state of creation.

*March 6, 1960*

## VIII

### TALK IN NEW DELHI

This is the last talk, and I would like this evening, if I may, to think aloud with you about virtue, sensitivity and what we call love and beauty.

I do not know if we have ever asked ourselves, at any time, why it is that we lose our sensitivity, not to any particular thing, but this extraordinary sensitivity to everything: to the open skies, to the rain on the road, to the vast, moving clouds, to the moonlight on the waters, to the smile on a face, to the weary bullock drawing a cart. Why is it that we lose this quality of nearness to things? Why is it that, as we grow up, we lose all sense of innocence, which is the very essence of sensitivity? Why do we lose the appreciation of

what is beautiful, the sense of astonishment, of amazement, of wonder at the whole process of living?

I think it would be good if we could approach this problem very attentively and hesitantly, so as to find out for ourselves why our minds become dull. Fundamentally, it seems to me, one cause of this dullness of the mind is its cultivation of virtue—please listen, I am going to explain. And dullness also comes about when the mind has committed itself to a course of action, when one belongs to a particular group and must act within the framework of that commitment. The mind is likewise made dull by the desire to possess power, to dominate. I think these are three of the principal causes of the mind's dullness.

Surely, what is essential is a very sensitive, alert mind, a mind that, being intense, creates its own efficiency; and that sensitivity, that intensity is denied to a mind that is merely cultivating virtue. There is a virtue which is not the product of the mind. What we generally call virtues—the moral sanctions, the professional ethics, the codes of righteous behaviour, and so on—are all creations of a particular society, are they not? Whereas, virtue in the true sense is not a product of the mind, and it is not recognizable as virtue by society.

I think one has to see very clearly that when a mode of conduct becomes respectable and is therefore recognizable as being virtuous, it is no longer virtuous. A virtue like being non-violent, being kindly, being humble, and so on, when recognized as virtue by society, or by oneself, ceases to be a virtue and becomes mere respectability. When the mind struggles to acquire a particular quality, be it humility, sympathy, non-violence, or what you will, it is surely not virtue; it is merely a form of resistance in which the mind is approximating itself to a pattern.

Please do feel your way into what is being said—but not in order to accept

or deny, because a mind that merely accepts or denies is really an unreasoning mind; it is not a thoughtful, intelligent mind, because it has already taken a stand from which it judges, and it is therefore incapable of exploration, inquiry.

We are inquiring into the nature of virtue. The mind must obviously be virtuous, because only a virtuous mind is orderly, sensitive, capable of acting out of its own clarity. But the mind that is induced, influenced, disciplined to be virtuous, is not a virtuous mind, because it knows only resistance, a constant adjustment to the demands of respectability. Any effort to be virtuous, to be moral, any endeavour to be something other than what one is, naturally creates a resistance to what one is, and this resistance prevents the understanding of what one is; yet such effort, which is really an avoidance, an escape from what one is, is generally regarded as virtue.

Take a very simple thing. In this country there is a great deal of talk about non-violence. All the political and so-called religious leaders talk about non-violence; but the fact is that man is violent. You are violent, and your violence is expressed, not only through everyday ambition, but through this tremendous effort you make to control, to discipline yourself, to force yourself to conform to a particular pattern. There are various kinds of violence, are there not? There is violence as cruelty to others; and the very essence of self-fulfilment is also violence. The cultivation of non-violence is a form of violence. This is a fact; and yet you cultivate non-violence as though it were a tremendous virtue. The acceptance of non-violence as an ideal is a process by which you become respectable through being recognized by society as a virtuous person. To be respectable, you must have the earmarks of non-violence; you must show that you are non-violent, your virtue must be recognizable by the people around you, by society.

So, recognition plays an immense part in what we call virtue. But virtue which is cultivated by the mind, which is recognized and accepted by society and has therefore become respectable, is not virtue at all. I think this is very important to understand, because it is one of the major factors which are making the mind dull. What matters, surely, is to see the fact that one is violent, to go into it, understand it, and not resist it—which does not mean that you must become violent and hit somebody! The important thing is to understand deeply the feeling of violence, which expresses itself in so many ways. If you begin to understand that every form of so-called virtue which is brought into being through effort, through resistance, through suppression, is destructive to sensitivity, then you will see that there is a virtue which is entirely different, because it is not the product of a cunning mind.

I wonder if you have ever felt a sense of humility? Most of us, I am sure, have felt respect; and where there is respect, there is also disrespect. You are respectful to your boss, to the great of the land, to the people who have power, position, authority. You show respect in order to get something in return; you give a garland in order to receive a blessing. You bow very low to the man above you, and push aside others who don't matter to you—they are the servants, the underlings, the underdogs. Now, there is a quality which has no element either of respect or disrespect, and that is the sense of humility. The mind in a state of humility is neither respectful nor disrespectful. But the mind that wants something in return is full of respect and disrespect. Having disrespect, it cultivates respect, which is a resistance to disrespect; so disrespect goes on festering like a wound in the mind, and respect also. But the mind that has a sense of humility is in an entirely different state.

Now if we, as we are listening this evening, can be sensitive to and directly experience that state of humility, we will

have touched something which cannot be recognized. Do you understand? You cannot say, "Well, my mind is humble, and I know what it means". The moment the recognizing process takes place, there is no longer a state of humility. Please understand this. Love is not recognizable. When we say that we love someone, we are using a word to communicate a feeling; but the moment we have recognized and expressed that feeling, the quality of it has already changed. What we can do, surely, is to see for ourselves that as long as the mind is in a state of respect and disrespect, it has not the quality of humility.

As I was saying, the quality of humility is not recognizable. Anything that is recognized by the mind as humility, is not humility. So one has to be aware of the manner of one's speech, the manner of one's being; one has to discover what is behind the words, the gestures, the actions. Through negation one comes to the positive, which is humility. Though humility is not recognizable, not describable, as respect and disrespect are, it has a positive quality which can be felt when the other state is not. A mind that is conscious of itself as being virtuous is really an immoral mind, and however much it may cultivate virtue, morality, it is still immoral. Now, just leave it at that.

Let us go on to the next thing, which is: why do most of us have an urge, a compulsion to commit ourselves to something? We belong to a party, to a group, to a sect; we commit ourselves to a framework of ideas, to a set of beliefs, to a system of philosophy; we regard ourselves as Communists, socialists, imperialists, capitalists, as followers of a particular *guru*, and all the rest of it. Why? Please, I am going to answer the question; but, if you who belong to something find out, as I am talking, *why* you belong, then my explanation will have a meaning, a significance.

Now, the politicians all over the world talk about peace, and we all want peace.

A mind in conflict, like war, is obviously destructive, and we realize that there must be peace. So what do we do? We immediately begin to join organizations, we commit ourselves to the Communists or to some other group which says it is going to bring about world peace. And what happens? You are committed to one group, and I to another, so inevitably we are in conflict with each other. If I am in the capitalists' camp, I say the Communists' talk about world peace is double-talk, and *vice versa*. So, the moment we belong to a group which promises peace, we are already in conflict with another group which promises peace in a different way; and the result is that we all talk about peace while perpetuating conflict.

Surely, we have to begin by understanding why we commit ourselves, why we belong to something or other. Why do you call yourself an Indian, a Moslem, a Buddhist, a Christian, or a Communist? Obviously, for a very simple reason. You desire to be identified with a group, to belong to something, because it gives you a sense of security. You say, "Action is necessary, therefore we must join together". And the moment you join together and have formed a group, you are battling with another group which wants to act in the same way. In other words, the action which comes from commitment to a party, to a political or religious group, to a particular society, *guru*, culture, or way of life, invariably leads to conflict—which is fairly obvious in the world at the present time.

Now, I think there is a totally different kind of action when the mind does not belong to anything, is not committed to any group. But first let us investigate why we have this compulsion to belong.

It is not only the little man who has this compulsion, but also the great intellectual, the saint—they all want to belong to something. Why? Observe yourself and you will see that if you do not belong to something, you feel insecure. Insecurity means fear, insecurity means economic loss, and belonging to

something gives to the self a feeling of expansion. Being a Communist, or a Catholic, or belonging to any other big, wide-spread organization, with all the implications involved in it, gives you an immense feeling of security. It also gives you a sense of importance; and from this sense of importance there springs action which invariably produces conflict with others.

Do please look at the phenomenon that is going on in the world. First we create this ugly thing called nationalism, thereby dividing ourselves into conflicting groups; and then, still holding on to our nationalism, we say there must be internationalism, brotherhood, and all that nonsense. What will bring peace to the world is really comprehensive action, that is, action outside the patterns which divide people and create conflict. When you and I do not belong to a thing, when we are not Indians, Americans, Christians, Buddhists, when we have put aside all these political and religious divisions which are destroying people—it is only then that we can meet as human beings, with dignity, and set about solving our many problems. The Communists are not going to solve our problems; nobody can solve them except you and me—when we have not committed ourselves to any group, to any pattern of action. Then there is an action which is much more dynamic, much more creative, much more vital. Most of us have committed ourselves, we belong to something, and that is one of the major reasons for our minds being so stupidly dull—a fact which we do not see, though it is right under our noses.

Sirs, do think it out, don't just agree with me. Your agreement or disagreement has very little significance. What has significance is to purge your thought, your whole system, of the urge to belong to something. You cannot be free of that urge unless you are aware of it in yourself, unless you examine it, go into it, understand it. If you do not condemn or justify it, if you do not say it is natural, that everybody wants to belong

to something, and so on, but understand it, really grasp the truth of it, then you will find that you are entirely free of it instantaneously. That is one of the strange things about truth. The perception of what is true in a problem, frees the mind from the problem. You don't have to do a thing.

In the same way, one has to see the fact that to belong to any group, to be committed to any religious or philosophical system, to any pattern of action, is destructive, because it divides men and makes the mind dull. When you are committed, when you belong to something, you cease to think beyond the prescribed pattern, because the moment you do, you become critical, and then you are thrown out, you are made insecure. Belonging to a group may make for very effective, efficient action, but that action is destructive. You resist seeing this fact because you do not know an action which is not the outcome of commitments, of belonging to something. But it is only when you don't belong to anything, to any organization, to any group, that there is a possibility of discovering, through that sense of negation, a positive action which is total. Do please understand this.

So one sees that virtue, as we know and cultivate it, is one of the factors that make the mind dull, mechanical. Another factor that makes the mind dull is the feeling of belonging to something. And there is a third factor which makes the mind dull: the desire for power.

I do not know if you have ever noticed in yourself this desire for power. You want to be prominent, famous, you want your opinion to be known, whether it is to a small circle of people, or on a world-wide scale. There is in each one of us this intense urge to be somebody, to be recognized by society as a successful person. If you watch your own mind you will see how, in a small way or in a big way, you crave recognition.

Please, sirs, this is very important to understand; because, as you will see, a mind that is established in power is an

evil mind. All power is evil, whether it be political power, or so-called religious power. The moment you have achieved power, position, success, your mind has already lost its suppleness, its alertness, its quickness, its extraordinary quality of natural growth, of gentleness.

You know, it is a most difficult thing to be anonymous. Many of us have a craving for anonymity, reach a point when we want to be anonymous, because there is beauty in complete anonymity, and invariably one feels extraordinarily free. So what do we do? We put on a loincloth, or enter a monastery, or take another name; but inwardly we are still full of ambition, only of a different kind. We now want to be known as a spiritual man; so we have only discarded one cloth and taken another, gotten rid of one name and assumed another. Outwardly we are putting on a show of anonymity, but inwardly we are burning with vanity and pursuing power. Our 'humility' consists in putting on a loincloth, or a robe, or taking only one meal a day, all of which is recognizable by society as being respectable.

I know you all smile and agree, but you are all after exactly the same thing. (*Laughter*). Don't laugh it away, sirs. You all want power, you all want position, prestige, though there may be one or two exceptions. And the mind that is seeking power, thinking it will do good, is a very destructive mind, because it is concerned with itself. Sirs, truth cannot be found unless the mind is totally anonymous. I wonder if you have noticed that love is anonymous! I may love my wife, my children, but the quality of that love is anonymous. Like the sunset, love is neither yours nor mine.

So there is evil, corruption when the mind is immersed in power; and the desire for power is one of the most difficult things to wipe out. It is not easy to be nobody, to be inwardly anonymous. You may say, "In sitting on the platform and talking, are you not expressing yourself?" Outwardly one may be talk-

ing, but inwardly one can be totally anonymous. And when there is this sense of complete anonymity, then you will find that there comes a comprehensive action which has nothing to do with the past, or with the thirst for power that creates such animosity and evil in the world. All power is evil, whether it be the power of nations, the power of leaders, the power of a wife over her husband, or of the husband over his wife and children. If you observe yourself when you are not posing, you will see, in the secret recesses of your own mind, that you too want power to dominate, to be known, to have your name appear in the newspapers; and when a mind is seeking power, it is a destructive mind, it can never bring about peace in the world.

So, these are factors that make the mind dull: the virtue which is cultivated by the mind and recognized by society as being virtuous; the thought and the action of a mind which is committed to a particular pattern of ideas; and the search for power, position, prestige. All these imply a self-centred activity, a self-importance, a self-expansion, do they not? It is this process that makes the mind dull, and a dull mind loses all its sensitivity.

Now, I do not know if you have ever considered what is beauty. I am not suddenly talking about something entirely different, because it is related to all that has been said this evening. I wonder if you have ever stopped of an evening to look at the sky? On your way here, did you notice the stormy clouds, their shape, their darkness, their depth, the extraordinary sense of power behind them? If you saw all that beauty, did you have a reaction to it, or was there only a sense of total perception in which there was no reaction?

Please, I am afraid this is going to be rather difficult, in the verbal sense; but if you have ever felt the quality of beauty, you will be instantaneously aware of the significance of what is being said. Most of us are insensitive to the sky, to the

road, to the passer-by, to death. But I am talking of a mind which is sensitive; I am inquiring into the nature of a mind that perceives beauty. Surely, when you perceive something totally, there is no reaction. You may express it in words, saying, "What a lovely sunset it is"; but the moment of total perception is a moment when your whole being is in a state of non-identification through memory.

Sirs, I am not talking apart from you, I am thinking aloud with you; and to go beyond, you must move with me, playing with the words. A mind that is not sensitive to beauty is a very sordid mind. It may build great dams, it may help to carry out any number of five-year plans, It may do this and that; but a mind that is insensitive to beauty is essentially a stupid mind, and it cannot create anything except that which is mechanical.

We are talking of beauty. Where there is a complete experiencing of something, there is no reaction of memory, and hence no furthering of memory through reaction. Such a mind is in a state of beauty; and beauty is related to love. Sirs, love is a passion.

Now, one has to be clear in the use of words. Most of us dread that word 'passion', because we live in a society which considers passion to be ugly, not respectable. But lust is different from passion. Love invariably goes with passion, not with lust. You have destroyed passion, carefully rooted it out, because you have said that passion is an ugly thing, and you are not passionate human beings. You may be lustful, and probably you are—sexually lustful, and lustful after power, position—, but you are not passionate human beings. And you cannot be passionate if there is no self-abandonment.

Do you understand? There must be that inward sense of austerity which in its very nature is simplicity. But you cannot cultivate austerity. If you do, it becomes a virtue which is recognizable and therefore respectable—a horrible thing. You know, sirs, without passion,

there is no passionate action. Mostly, action that we have at present is not passionate; it is a calculated, cunning action.

Intensity, or passion, is the outcome of self-abnegation—not the abnegation which is a denial of this and that, but the total self-abnegation which brings about a state of austerity. In this state of austerity, the mind is simple; and such a mind is a passionate mind. Only the passionate mind knows love; and only the mind that knows love can perceive what beauty is—not the artist who paints a picture and is full of his own egocentricity. Love is passionate, therefore love is beauty. Without beauty there is no love, and without love there is no beauty. Only the mind that perceives the everlasting to everlasting—it is only such a mind that can act without creating misery.

Do please listen with your heart to what is being said, and do not regard it as a talk being given on a topic. It is your own mind of which you have to be aware. It is your own action that matters, not the action of the political or religious leaders. It is what you are, what your mind is that counts. The mind that has not committed itself, that does not belong to anything, the mind that is not strengthening its own egocentricity through the cultivation of virtue, the mind that is no longer seeking power—it is only such a mind that knows love and therefore beauty. Such a mind, surely, is totality, it has no beginning and no end, and its action is a blessing, not a curse. Only such a mind can receive the real, that which is immeasurable.

*March 9, 1960*

# I

## TALK IN OJAI

I think from the very first we should be quite clear why we gather at these meetings. I feel that it would be an

utter waste of time if you treated these talks as a form of entertainment, as something to do of an afternoon or of a morning when you have nothing better to do. And I feel it would also be a waste of time, yours and mine, if you merely listened as though you were trying to gather some information. Because these meetings, I feel, are not merely for the communication of ideas, but rather for an inquiry into the very process of thinking; and that requires, on your part, a great deal of attention. I do not mean by attention mere concentration, but an attentive mind which is willing to explore, to examine, and to discover.

As these meetings are not entertainment in any form whatsoever, I think it would be very profitable if we could also dispense with the idea that we are doing any kind of propaganda. I am not trying to convince you of anything—of any particular way of thinking, or of a new way of living, a new pattern of action; because I do not believe in propaganda. Ideas do not fundamentally change the quality of the mind. We are trying to discuss, to explore the quality of the mind, the nature of thinking—and to go beyond, if possible, into spheres, into realms where thought cannot penetrate. For after all, thought is very limited. All reasoning has its own conditioning. One must reason, one must think clearly, definitely, positively; but thinking, however wide, however deep, however expansive, is still limited. All thinking begins with knowledge, or the accumulation of knowledge, it arises from the background of knowledge; and knowledge, surely, is very limited.

So, if we can explore together our own minds, then I think these meetings will be very worth while. But to inquire into oneself is very arduous, very difficult; for most of us are not used to it. Most of us are used to being told what to do, what to think; we are used to pursuing a certain series of ideas, a rule of conduct; but it is quite another matter to explore the total process of conscious-

ness, to investigate the whole of this entity which we call the mind. So I think it would be very important if, without any persuasion, without any direction or influence, we could together investigate our own minds.

However much progress we may make in this world, however far we may go into the skies, visit the moon, Venus, and all the rest of it, the lives of most of us are still very shallow, superficial; they are still outward. And it is much more difficult to go inward; there is no technique for it, no professor to teach it, no laboratory where you can learn to travel within. There is no teacher who can guide you—and please believe me, there is no authority of any kind that can help you to investigate this complex entity called the mind. You have to do it entirely by yourself, without depending on a thing. And as modern civilization is becoming more and more complex, more and more outward, progressive, there is a tendency for all of us to live still more superficially, is there not? We attend more concerts, we read more clever books, we go endlessly to the cinema, we gather together to discuss intellectually, we investigate ourselves psychologically with the help of analysts, and so on; or, because we live such superficial lives, we turn to churches and fill our minds with their dogmas, both unreasonable and reasonable, with beliefs that are almost absurd; or we escape into some form of mysticism. In other words, realizing that our everyday living is shallow, most of us try to run away from it. We engage our minds in speculative philosophies, or in what we call meditation, contemplation, which is a form of self-hypnosis; or, if we are at all intellectual, we create a thought-world of our own in which we live satisfied, intellectually content.

Seeing this whole process, it seems to me that the problem is not what to do, or how to live, or what is the immediate action to be taken when we are confronted with war, with the catastrophes that are actually going on in the world;

but rather, how to inquire into freedom. Because without freedom, there is no creation. By freedom I do not mean the freedom to do what you like: to get into a car and zip along a road, or to think what you like, or to engage yourself in some particular activity. It seems to me that such forms of freedom are not really freedom at all. But is there a freedom of the mind? As most of us do not live in a creative state, I think it is imperative for any thoughtful, serious man to inquire very profoundly and very earnestly into this question.

If you observe, you will see that the margin of freedom is getting very, very narrow; politically; religiously, technologically, our minds are being shaped, and our everyday life is diminishing that quality of freedom. The more civilized we become, the less there is of freedom. I do not know if you have noticed how civilization is making us into technicians; and a mind that is built around a technique, is not a free mind. A mind that is shaped by a church, by dogmas, by organized religion, is not a free mind. A mind that is darkened by knowledge, is not a free mind. If we observe ourselves, it soon becomes obvious that our minds are weighed down by knowledge—we know *so* much. Our minds are bound by the beliefs and dogmas which organized religions throughout the world have laid upon them. Our education is largely a process of acquiring more technique in order to earn a better livelihood, and everything about us is shaping our minds, every form of influence is directing, controlling us.

So, the margin of freedom is getting narrower and narrower. The terrible weight of respectability, the acceptance of public opinion, our own fears, anxieties—all these things, surely, if one is at all aware of them, are diminishing the quality of freedom. And this is what, perhaps, we can discuss and understand during the talks that are to follow: how can one free the mind, and yet live in this world with all its techniques, knowledge, experiences? I think this is

the problem, the central issue, not only in this country, but in India, in Europe, and all over the world. We are not creative, we are becoming mechanical. I do not mean by creativeness merely writing a poem, or painting a picture, or inventing a new thing. Those are merely the capacities of a talented mind. I mean a state which is creation itself.

But we shall go into all that, if we may, when we understand the central issue: that our minds are becoming more and more conditioned, that the margin of freedom is getting less and less. We are either Americans, with all the emotional, nationalistic quality behind the flag, or we are Russians, Indians, this or that. We are separated by frontiers, by dogmas, by conflicting ways of thinking, by different categories of organized religious thought; we are separated politically, religiously, economically and culturally. And if you examine this whole process that is taking place around us, you will see that as individual human beings we count for very little; we are almost nothing at all.

We have many problems, individually as well as collectively. Individually, perhaps, we shall be able to solve some of them, and collectively we shall do what we can. But all these problems, surely, are not the main issue. It seems to me that the main issue is to free the mind; and one cannot free the mind, or the mind cannot free itself, until it understands itself. Therefore self-knowledge is essential: the knowing of oneself. That requires a certain quality of awareness; because, if one doesn't know oneself, there is no basis for reasoning, for thought. But knowing and knowledge are two different things. Knowing is a constant process, whereas knowledge is always static.

I do not know if that point is clear; if not, perhaps I can make it clear as we go along. But what I want to do this evening is merely to point out certain things, and later on, during the talks that are to follow, we can investigate them. We have to begin by seeing the

overall picture—not concentrating on any particular point, on any particular problem or action, but looking at the whole of our existence, as it were. Once having seen this extraordinary picture of ourselves as we are, we can then take the book of ourselves and go into it chapter by chapter, page by page.

So, to me the central problem is freedom. Freedom is not *from* something; that is only a reaction. Freedom, I feel, is something entirely different. If I'm free from fear, that is one thing. The freedom from fear is a reaction, which only brings about a certain courage. But I'm talking of freedom which is not *from* something, which is not a reaction; and that requires a great deal of understanding.

I would like to suggest that those who are coming regularly to these meetings should give some time, when they are away from here, to thinking over what we have been discussing. We are not refusing or accepting anything, because I am not in any way your authority; I am not setting myself up as a teacher. To me, there is no teacher, there is no follower—and please believe me, I mean this very earnestly. I am not your teacher, so you are not my followers. The moment you follow, you are bound, you are not free. If you accept any theory, you are bound by that theory; if you practise any system, however complicated, however ancient or modern it may be, you are a slave to that system.

What we are trying to do is to investigate, to find out together. You are not merely listening to what I point out, but in listening you are trying to discover for yourself, so that you are free. The person who is speaking is of no value; but what is said, what is uncovered, what one discovers for oneself, is of the highest importance. All this personal cult, this personal following, or the putting up of a person in authority, is utterly detrimental. What is of importance is what *you* discover in your investigation of how to free the mind, so that as a human being you are creative.

After all, reality, or that which is not expressible in words, cannot be found by a mind that is clogged, weighed down. There is, I think, a state, call it what you will, which is not the experience of any saint, of any seeker, of any person who is endeavouring to find it; because all experience is really a perpetuation of the past. Experience only strengthens the past; therefore experience does not free the mind. The freeing element is the state of the mind that is capable of experiencing without the entity who experiences. This again requires a certain explanation, and we shall go into it in the coming talks.

What I do want to say this evening is that there is a great deal of disturbance, a great deal of uncertainty, not only individually, but also in the world; and because of this disturbance, this uncertainty, there has arisen every kind of philosophy: the philosophy of despair, the philosophy of living in the immediate, of accepting existence as it is. There is a breaking away from traditions, from acceptance, and the building of a world of reaction. Or, leaving one religion, you go to another; if you are a Catholic, you drop Catholicism and become a Hindu, or join some other group. Surely, none of these responses will in any way help the mind to be free.

To bring about this freedom, there must be self-knowledge: knowing the way you think, and discovering in that process the whole structure of the mind. You know, fact is one thing, and symbol is another; the word is one thing, and what the word represents is another. For most of us, the symbol—the symbol of the flag, the symbol of the cross—has become extraordinarily important, so we live by symbols, by words; but the word, the symbol is never important. And to break down the word, the symbol, to go behind it, is an astonishingly difficult task. To free the mind from the words you are an American, you are a Catholic, you are a democrat, or a Russian, or a Hindu, is very arduous. And yet, if we would inquire into what

is freedom, we must break down the symbol, the word. The frontier of the mind is laid down by our education, by the acceptance of the culture in which we have been brought up, by the technology which is part of our heritage; and to penetrate all these layers that condition our thinking, requires a very alert, intense mind.

I think it is most important from the very beginning to understand that these talks are not meant in any way to direct or control your thinking, or to shape your mind. Our problem is much too great to be solved by belonging to some organization, or by hearing some speaker, by accepting a philosophy from the Orient, or getting lost in Zen Buddhism, by finding a new technique of meditation, or by having new visions through the use of mescaline or some other drug. What we need is a very clear mind—a mind that is not afraid to investigate, a mind that is capable of being alone, that can face its own loneliness, its own emptiness, a mind that is capable of destroying itself to find out.

So, I would point out to all of you the importance of being really serious; you are not coming to these talks for entertainment, or out of curiosity, or just because I happen to have come back after five years. All that is a waste of time. There is something much deeper, wider, which we have to discover for ourselves: how to go beyond the limitations of our own consciousness. Because all consciousness is a limitation; and all change within consciousness is no change at all. And I think it is possible—not mystically, not in a state of illusion, but actually—to go beyond the frontiers which the mind has laid down. But one can do that only when one is capable of investigating the quality of the mind and having really profound knowledge of oneself. Without knowing yourself, you cannot go far, because you will get lost in an illusion, you will escape into fanciful ideas, into some new form of sectarianism.

The more we advance in worldliness, and the more progress there is, the greater is our enslavement—which doesn't mean that there must be no progress. The more we are so-called educated technologically, and the more we cripple ourselves with knowledge, which darkens the mind, the narrower grows our freedom. The more there is knowledge, the more there is fear—there is no lessening of fear; because knowledge darkens the mind, as experience burdens the mind.

So, considering all these many aspects of our living, our main problem, as the speaker sees it, is this question of freedom. Because it is only in freedom that we can discover; it is only in freedom that there can be the creative mind; it is only when the mind is free that there is endless energy—and it is this energy that is the movement of reality.

To conclude this first talk, I would suggest that, until we meet tomorrow morning, you consider, observe, and be aware of the enslavement of your own mind. And perhaps we can, during one of these meetings, discuss, exchange ideas. As I said, this first talk is merely an outline of the contents of the book; and if you are content with the outline, with the headlines, with a few ideas, then I'm afraid you will not go very far. It is not a matter of acceptance or denial, but rather of inquiry into yourself—which does not demand any form of authority. On the contrary, it demands that you should follow nobody, that you should be a light unto yourself; and you cannot be a light unto yourself if you are committed to any particular mode of conduct, to any form of activity which has been laid down as being respectable, as being religious. One must begin very near to go very far; and one cannot go very far if one does not know oneself. The knowing of oneself does not depend on any analyst. One can observe oneself as one goes along in every form of relationship, every day; and without that understanding, the mind can never be free.

*May 21, 1960*

## II

## TALK IN OJAI

I would like, if I may this morning, to talk about authority, knowledge and freedom. It seems to me that the more mechanical the mind becomes, the greater is our desire to feel strongly, to perceive deeply, to have wider perceptions, intuitions and insights. And most of us resort to various forms of stimulation in order to have these intense feelings, these intense experiences, perceptions. I think one must have observed this fact, quite casually even. The more shallow and mechanical the mind becomes, and the more it is bound to a routine, the greater is its demand for wider, deeper, more profound feelings. So you resort to every form of stimulation: to drink, to sex, and to various other forms of outward and inward stimulation. You go to church to enjoy the mass, which is a form of stimulation, or you resort to certain drugs, to mescalin, L. S. D., so that you can perceive more profoundly the beauty of a flower, see more intensely its colour, feel more deeply the beauty of the hills and the quietness of an evening. And I think this dependence on stimulation is inevitable as long as the mind is being conditioned by the process of civilization.

Before I go into all that, I would like to say that it is very important that you and I establish right communication between ourselves; because, after all, the purpose of these talks is to communicate with each other, and not to impose upon you a certain series of ideas. Ideas never change the mind, never bring about a radical transformation in the mind. But if we can individually communicate with each other at the same time and at the same level, then perhaps there will be an understanding which is not merely propaganda. It is not my intention to persuade you to think in any direction, along any particular line; because the more we are persuaded by

the influences of propaganda, the less we are capable of feeling, and the less intense we are. So these talks are not meant to dissuade or to persuade you in any way, either actually or subliminally.

To communicate, we must have the opportunity to listen to each other. To listen is an art in itself. Very few of us listen—to the winds, to the silent operations of our own minds. We never really listen to another, or to the hints, the intimations of the unconscious. We are so occupied with the daily activity, the daily routine, with our anxieties, worries, angers, jealousies, that there is no space left in which the mind can be quiet to listen, to find out, to understand.

So I would suggest that you listen, not in any way to deny or accept, but as though you were listening to some facts; because the very listening to a fact is in itself action. If I know how to listen, that very listening is an action in itself. But if I do not know how to listen, and listen only partially, there is then the idea that needs to be put into action. Listening itself is a form of harmonious action, in which there is no interval between the idea and the action. If you think this out, you will see how true it is.

Bearing in mind that in no way do I intend to persuade you to any particular philosophy, to any particular form of meditation or course of action, let us, in communicating with each other, see for ourselves very definitely and distinctly how the mind is becoming more and more mechanical, how modern civilization is making the mind more limited with knowledge, with authority. Our lives being mechanistic, we invariably turn to some form of stimulation, either religious or superficial, and these stimulations inevitably further deaden the mind.

So I would like to explore, to talk over with you the question of authority; because authority does corrupt the mind. Authority limits the depth of the mind. Authority cripples all thought, it lays a frontier to the mind. The solution does

not lie in merely breaking away from authority, but in understanding the complex problem of authority. The understanding of authority is freedom from authority.

As we can see in the case of all governments, as well as in education and in science, there is the exercise of authority, the demand that you copy, imitate, follow, obey. All organized religions, with their dogmas, with their beliefs, demand obedience, not only in the monasteries, but also from the layman; they exercise their influence to make you conform to an established pattern. And the mind seeks authority—not only the authority of the specialist, of the doctor, of the technician, but also of the priest, of the teacher, of the *guru*, of the Master; or it seeks the authority of a book, whether it be the Bible, the *Gita*, or the latest book on health.

Why does the mind seek authority? I do not know if you have gone into it, if you have thought it out. I think the mind seeks authority because it wants to be secure. We abhor the idea of being uncertain—uncertain in our relationships, uncertain of our ability to arrive, to succeed, to discover; so we put aside the fear that uncertainty creates, the anxiety of a mind that is not sure, by seeking some form of authority.

Please do follow what is being said, not merely verbally or intellectually, but see this fact operating in your own mind—the demand to be secure, to do the right thing, to copy, to imitate in order to succeed, in order to be safe, in order to arrive, to fulfil. So authority is built up.

The understanding of authority is quite complex, because authority takes many forms. There is the authority of the policeman, of the laws of society; there is the authority of a community, of public opinion; there is the authority of nature, and so on. Where is authority right, and where is authority totally wrong? To find out requires a great deal of investigation and understanding. To follow the laws of society, to keep to the

right side of the road, is necessary. But where does authority make the mind mechanistic? Surely, it is only when the mind is free, clear, unhindered by authority, by imitation, by the desire to be secure—it is only then that the mind, being free, can feel intensely without stimulation, without drugs.

So there is this complex process of authority—the authority of the church, of the book, of the law, of the specialist; and unless we understand authority, with its imitation, its corrupting influence, there is no freedom. And it is only when the mind is free that there is a state of creation.

I wonder if you have ever experienced what it is to create, or to be in the state of creation? Because I feel that God, or what name you will, is that state of creation; and only a free mind can discover that absolute state. That is why it is necessary to understand the whole problem of authority. Understanding itself brings its own fruit. There is no understanding first, and freedom afterwards. When you understand the complex problem of authority, that very understanding is a process of freeing the mind from authority. Understanding frees the mind from effort. Effort implies conformity, does it not? There is effort to be or to live according to a particular pattern of thought, and such effort implies, essentially, the whole question of authority. The action and the very desire of a mind that is caught in effort, in trying to be something, demands authority and conformity. Though we cannot go into all the details, one can grasp immediately, if one's mind is given to it, what is basically implied in this question of authority.

Then there is the problem of knowledge. I know it is now the fashion, and always has been, probably, to think that the more learned you are, the more books you have read, the more knowledge you have accumulated, the freer you are. And I wonder if knowledge does free the mind? I am not advocating

ignorance; I am not saying that you should not read. But I want to question this whole problem of knowledge.

What do we mean by knowledge? Surely, knowledge implies the process of recognition; and the process of recognition is based on experience, is it not? So experience is the beginning of knowledge; and does experience free the mind? Experience may give you a technique in action, and probably it is necessary. If you are an engineer, or a potter, or a violinist, or a writer, or a technician of some kind or other, knowledge is necessary. But when does knowledge darken the mind? Where is the demarcation between knowledge and darkness? When is the mind crippled by knowledge? And when is the mind made free? When does knowledge no longer cripple the mind?

To understand this question, we must go into the problem of experience, must we not? We think that the more experience we have, the freer, more enlightened and more capable we are. The more experience we have, the more capable we are in a certain direction, obviously. The better our technique, the more skilled we are with our hands, the more perfect we are in our mechanistic, technical knowledge, the greater is our capacity in earning a livelihood. That is obvious, we don't have to discuss it. But we do have to find out, surely, if the mind is darkened by knowledge, by experience. That is, does not the mind, through knowledge, make itself secure? Do you understand? The more knowledge I have, the more secure I am. In its accumulation of knowledge, the mind builds itself a shelter, makes itself secure; and a mind that is secure is a dead mind. Haven't you noticed the people who are very religious, who are clothed in righteous behaviour, who are absolutely sure of their dogma, of their belief, how dead they are—though they call themselves religious, mystical, and all the rest of it? It is the desire to be completely secure that breeds darkness

through knowledge; and such a mind can never be free.

So, if you go into it very deeply, you will find that knowledge is really a very complex thing, involving the whole of our consciousness—not only the consciousness with which we are familiar, the consciousness which is occupied daily in going to the office, learning a technique, and so on, but also the unconscious, the hidden part of the mind. If you go into this whole process of consciousness, which includes the unconscious, you will find there is no corner of it which knowledge has not penetrated and conditioned. Either as racial inheritance, or through the acceptance of modern education, knowledge has made our consciousness a vehicle of the known; and the mind may function brilliantly, very intellectually, but so long as it does not understand the operation of knowledge, it is still functioning in darkness. If you examine experience, you will see that every experience is a strengthening of recognition.

I wonder if I am conveying anything at all? You see, we are considering the liberation of the mind, so that the mind can be in that state of creation which is not concerned with expression, though expression may come from it. A creative mind is never concerned with expression; it is not concerned with action, with reform. Creation is a timeless movement—a movement which is never concerned with the immediate; and only the immediate is concerned with reform.

I do not know if, while walking alone in the woods, or along a street, you have ever noticed a moment when everything in you is silent, completely still. There is an unexpected, uninvited moment in which the mind, with all its anxieties, with all its worries and pursuits and compulsions, has completely come to an end. In that unexpected, spontaneous moment, time has totally ceased. And if you happen to be gifted as a painter, as a writer, or as a housewife, you may

express that moment in action; but the action is not that moment. The action of painting may give you fame, money, position, prestige; and man, seeking these things, goes after the technique and loses the other. That moment must have happened to most of us at sometime or other in our lives; and then we wish to capture, to hold, to continue in that moment. So, the experience of that moment darkens the mind with its knowledge of that moment, and thereby prevents further experiencing. That is why experience as knowledge is destructive to the new.

Please, this is not just my special way of looking at life. These are facts. The more experience you have, the more the mind is made dull; there is no innocency of the mind; there is never a moment when the mind is not caught in knowledge, which is essentially of time. So, if you observe, you will see that knowledge—to know, to practise, to hold—darkens the mind; and the mind, being darkened, seeks greater, wider stimulation, so it turns to religions, to philosophies, theologies, speculations, or to the latest drugs.

The mind which is concerned with freedom must explore the question of authority, as well as that of knowledge; for knowledge and authority go together. Unfortunately, most of you are probably listening to me because you think I have some kind of authority. You probably think I know what I'm talking about. (*Laughter*). No, no, sirs, please don't laugh it away; do listen. There is this absurdity of reputation, fame and all that; but you are actually listening to find out for yourself the truth of the matter, are you not? And if you examine this whole problem of experiencing, you will see that every form of experience which takes root in the soil of the mind, is detrimental, because it destroys the freedom of the mind; it breeds a sense of security, and therefore there is no innocency, no freshness to the mind. Such a mind cannot renew itself, except in further experience—which is the

process of recognizing; it is the result of the past, and therefore a continuation of the past, however modified.

So, a mind that is concerned with the understanding of freedom must not inquire superficially, but delve deeply within itself to discover the anatomy and the structure of authority. A mind that merely follows authority can never know what it is to be creative. A mind that has disciplined itself to a pattern of action, is not a free mind. Through discipline the mind can never be free. The mind can be free only by understanding this whole problem of discipline—not at the end, but at the very beginning of the practice of discipline.

You see, to understand a problem like knowledge requires complete attention, and that attention is its own discipline. I do not need a discipline to understand knowledge. The moment I begin to explore the problem, that very exploration demands that the mind discipline itself. Do you understand? Any material has within it its own discipline. To do anything with a piece of wood, you must work in a certain way. The nature of the material imposes its own discipline. Similarly, in the very understanding of this problem of knowledge and authority, in which are implied discipline, experience and time, there is a discipline which is not imposed. In that discipline there is no conflict or contradiction.

So, the very process of understanding is its own discipline and its own freedom. The mind that has not investigated, that has not discovered for itself the truth of knowledge and authority, can never be free. It may go to all the churches, it may read innumerable books, it may discipline itself from morning till night; but it is not a free mind.

I am talking of the mind as a total thing, not just as the machinery of thought; the mind that succeeds, that fails, that loves, that remembers, that recognizes, that suffers, that knows pity, enjoyment. I am talking of that totality. And that totality of the mind cannot be

perceived through any part. You must perceive it as a whole, feel it entirely; and then you can consider the individual things of the mind. The mind is the unconscious as well as the conscious; there is no division between the two; and it is essential to feel the whole nature of the mind, the quality of that totality, if you would understand what it is to be free, and what it is to be in that state of creation which has no beginning and no end.

This is not a silly, frustrating sense of mysticism. It demands a great deal of attention and the application of thought—or rather, not thought, but an insistent inquiry into the very process of thinking, feeling, being. And as one begins to understand, one will discover for oneself—naturally, without any compulsion, without any urge—what it is to be free, and what is that state which is not of time and which is not measurable by the mind.

*May 22, 1960*

### III

#### TALK IN OJAI

When I came to give this series of talks, I had the full intention to go through with eight talks; but unfortunately, I can't do it. I can only give these four—and so the last talk will be tomorrow morning. As many of you have come from great distances to listen to them, I regret very much that physically I can't go on with all the talks. I'm sorry.

I would like, this evening, to talk over with you a rather complex problem: that of consciousness, revolution, and religion. Throughout life, however wide our learning, however intelligent we may be, we do have accidents, we do make mistakes; life doesn't run smoothly, as we would like. And we make great effort to alter, to change our lives; we try to reform ourselves, to conform to a certain mould of conduct, to fit into a

groove of moral action. But it seems to me that, however necessary, such effort does not bring about a radical transformation within oneself. However much we may struggle individually to do the right thing, to behave rightly, to lead a simple, moral life, these activities, though necessary, seem so futile, so empty, when the world as a whole is in such a dreadful, catastrophic state; and I'm sure most of you must have asked yourselves, what can one individual do about this whole awful mess? I think that is a wrong question altogether; and a wrong question will not find a right answer. I think one has to put the right question; and the right question is not whether the transformation of an individual will affect society, the whole mass of humanity. There is now a tremendous crisis, not economically, socially, intellectually, or even religiously, but there is a crisis in consciousness itself. I think *that* is the real issue, and not the mere transformation of the individual. One has to understand totally, if one can, this crisis in consciousness; and to do that, one must examine the whole process of consciousness.

I am going to talk about consciousness in very simple terms, using ordinary words, not psychological, metaphysical, or complicated words. I am using the word 'consciousness' to mean all the levels of our thinking, feeling—the totality of our being; not only the totality of the individual being, but also the totality of the collective, the human. And I hope that you will not just listen to the words, which would be merely an intellectual process, but will think it out with me as we go along. The art of listening is very important—to understand what it is to listen. I feel that very few of us really listen. When we do listen, we translate or interpret what we hear according to the pattern of our own thinking, or we reject it altogether. To listen totally is to listen without accepting, rejecting, comparing or contradicting; and I feel that if one can

listen totally, then the very act of listening brings about an instantaneous perception, understanding. So, if you are at all serious about these things, may I suggest that you listen in this manner.

We must all be aware of this extraordinary crisis in the world—by which I do not mean the conflict between Russia and America, or between the East and the West, because that is not a crisis at all. That is merely a political upheaval, maintained by the politicians throughout the world. The politicians have not created the crisis of which I am speaking; and the politicians do not make for peace, any more than the so-called religious people do. If we would deeply understand the real, fundamental crisis, it seems to me that we have to inquire afresh into this whole question of what is consciousness; because the revolution has to take place, not at the economic, social, or moral level, or at the level of ideas, but in consciousness itself. I feel the crisis is *there*.

So, what is this thing that we call consciousness, the mind? I do not know if you have ever experienced the totality of consciousness, which is rather difficult—the *totality*, not just the segment of consciousness which is aware of the various experiences that one has every day, and which interprets, reacts, responds to those experiences. That is only a part of consciousness. There is the world of dreams, and the interpretation of those dreams, which is still part of consciousness. Then there is the whole world of thought, of knowledge, of experience, of things remembered—the past in conjunction with the present, which creates the future. That too is part of consciousness. There is also the influence of the family, of the group, that unconscious conditioning which is racial inheritance, however young the race may be, or however old—surely, all that is part of this consciousness of which the psychologists speak, and of which we also speak, rather easily and facetiously, in referring to our own minds. So, consciousness is the known, and the

unknown—that part of the mind which has never been delved into.

Now, most of us live at the superficial level of consciousness, carrying on from day to day rather wearily, with a certain amount of boredom, frustration, with here and there a touch of joy and fulfilment, with sorrow, travail, misery, and all the conflicts that we are heir to; and, within that field of consciousness, we make effort to change. When we get angry, we try not to be angry; when we are jealous, envious, greedy, we try to control, to reform ourselves. But this is all within the field of the known; and a problem of the known has an answer which is already known. I think this is important to understand. When the mind puts to itself any problem, the mind already knows the answer, because the problem is known. That is, when you know the problem, whether it is in the economic field, in the field of electronics, or wherever else, the answer is also known. The moment you put a problem into words, that problem has an answer which is already known, though you may take time to discover it. You can see the truth of this for yourself, if you have thought about it.

So, all our endeavour to change, to bring about a radical revolution inwardly and outwardly, is within the field of consciousness; and consciousness, as you will see if you really go into it, is a world of symbols. We live by symbols. The symbol is a word; the symbol is the cross for the Christian; the symbol is the image which the mind creates out of its own experiences, and from which it projects visions, ideas. We live in a world of symbols; and the symbol is always the known. The symbol is the known representing the unknown, which the mind cannot feel out for itself.

Please, I am only putting into words what we already know. If we have given any thought to these matters, we already know all this. And we also know, very deeply for ourselves, that any change within this field of conscious-

ness, the field of the known, is not a revolution; it is only a change in the pattern of behaviour, in the pattern of thought. A man may give up Christianity and become a Zen Buddhist, or give up Hinduism and become a Catholic, but his action is still within the field of consciousness; it is merely a change in the pattern which holds him within the cage. And that is what we are all doing: we are always moving within the field of the known.

Do consider what is being said, don't reject it, saying, "I don't understand". It is very simple to understand. I'll try to make it clear by putting it differently.

As I said, the moment we are capable of putting any problem into words, bringing it into focus, into the field of consciousness, such a problem—whether it be economic, social, technical, or moral—has already an answer; therefore it is no longer a problem. The moment you have an answer, it is not a problem. The answer may take several months to investigate and work out; but the mind knows the answer, because it has been able to put the problem into words. I think this is important to understand, especially if you would follow what I am going to say. The mind already knows the answer to any problem it can put into words, however complex, however subtle, however delicate; therefore it is not a problem at all. The mind *thinks* it is a problem, but it is not. If you understand that, then the next question I would like to put forward is this: is there a problem which the mind—because it is always functioning within the field of the known—has never been able to put into words, consciously or or even unconsciously, and therefore cannot possibly answer? I feel there is such a problem—a problem which the mind cannot tackle, for which consciousness has no answer. Therefore, that is the real problem.

Do please give a little attention, if you will, to what I am trying to convey.

As I said, the crisis is in consciousness; the revolution is not, as we all think, at

the economic, social or intellectual level. If there is a 'revolution' there, it is merely a change of pattern, a change of ideas, the building up of new theories. If the crisis is within the field of the known, we will answer it according to our conditioned minds, as Americans, Russians, Hindus, or what you will. But a mind that has been through this so-called revolution, that has understood all these various problems, with their answers—such a mind is confronted with quite a different issue, because it sees there is no possibility whatsoever of a fundamental change within the field of the known. Then where is the revolution to take place?

Am I making this thing somewhat clear? Please don't agree with me, because it is not a matter of agreement or disagreement; it is not something you can reject because you don't understand it, or accept because you understand a few words during an hour's talk. It is a problem that must really be gone into, and this requires profound thinking, or meditation, contemplation.

So there must be a revolution, a tremendous revolution—but not within the field of the known, because that has no meaning any more. Whether you are a Communist, a Socialist, a Democrat, a Republican, an American, a Hindu—oh, who cares? If you happen to be a Communist, you are more brutal, more ruthless in seeking power; but you do mischief, one way or the other. And if you belong to any particular organized religion, you are equally dictated to by the bosses in the name of God, Christ, the church, and all the rest of it. The older the organized religion, the more clever it is in adapting itself to the present conditions and the new ways of dominating the mind.

We know all this. But unfortunately, though we know it, most of us belong to something or other, or we change from this to that, thinking we are thereby making tremendous progress. And when we have finished with that whole process—I am not in any way talking

patronizingly about it—when we have finished with all that, then the question arises, what is one to do? Do you understand? You have changed. You don't belong to any organized religion. You have given up this belief, that belief—if you have. You are no longer an American, or a Hindu, or a Russian, or a German—you are a human being. You do not belong to any one country. You belong to the world; the world is yours, though the politicians have divided this beautiful earth as American, Russian, Chinese. You have been through all that; and yet the mind, consciousness, is still struggling within the field of its own frontiers. You understand what I'm talking about, I hope?

Realizing this, what is one to do? I think *that* is the problem, that is the crisis, though we don't know how to articulate it, put it into words. That is the problem, not only of the intellectuals, but of the religious person who is more or less serious. The people who go to church, who perform a few rituals, join a monastery, or hold certain beliefs—they are not religious people at all. We'll come to that presently.

So, how is the mind to bring about that energy which is not contaminated by consciousness? Do you understand?

Let me put it this way. All of us, most unfortunately, look to something greater than ourselves; we all want leaders to tell us what to do. When we are fed up with the political leaders, we turn to the religious leaders, or we retire to a monastery to meditate; so religion has become, for most of us, an escape from the reality of existence—not an escape from consciousness, but an escape from the reality of everyday existence. Your creeds and dogmas, your churches and organized beliefs, are simply a means for the mind to take comfort. Your belief in God is as meaningless as another's non-belief in God. There is no essential difference between the two. You have been taught to believe, and the other has been taught *not* to believe; or

you believe because you rationalize, depending on your conditioning.

Now, when you have seen through all this illusion of symbols, ideas and words, you may become cynical or bitter, like the Angry Young Men in England and the Beatniks in this country, which is fairly easy to do; but when you are no longer cynical, bitter, despairing, then you must inevitably ask, "Where is the religious mind to find the answer?" Books cannot give you the answer; there is no book that can show you a thing. Books can explain, they can give you knowledge; but knowledge only darkens the mind, and for the mind to seek the answer through knowledge, has no meaning. So, when you have discarded all religions, all the behaviour patterns which society calls morality, what are you to do? I am not saying there is no moral action—that is not the point. When you see how the mind becomes a slave to ideas, a slave to prosperity—when the mind is fully aware of all this, what is it to do to bring about a real revolution, not within the field of consciousness, but a revolution which is not contaminated by the known? In putting it differently, am I helping to make it clear, or am I only making it more complicated?

Look, sirs, let me put it another way. You see, life for most of us is a terrible bore. Our lives are routine. We try to fulfil, at whatever level, and every fulfilment has its own shadow of despair; every joy, every bursting forth has its own misery and its own degradation. We know all this; but knowing it doesn't prevent us from going on in the same way, in the same direction. And we also know, as we begin to examine this struggle within, that all individual effort to be good, to be noble, to pursue the right ideal, and all the rest of it, is invariably a process of egotistic salvation, which creates endless conflict. If you examine this effort, in which most of us are caught, you will see that it is essentially born of self-contradiction. A mind which is not in a state of self-con-

tradiction, doesn't make an effort: it is. Effort is the state of a mind, of a heart that is in conflict with itself, because it is everlastingly struggling to become something; and what it becomes is the result of its own contradiction, and therefore breeds still further contradiction.

So, all our effort—intellectual, moral, economic—is very restrictive, limiting, time-bound, and there is no way out of it. Seeing this fact, one begins to ask oneself: where is the revolution which is new? Where is the state of mind which is not contaminated by the old? Where is there innocence which is not a mere denial or intellectual formula? Where is there a mind which has been through this whole process, which has travelled through all these fields of limitation, and which knows what it is to be creative in the ultimate sense of that word? Creativity is not painting pictures, or writing poems—I don't mean that. I am referring to that state of creation which is energy without a beginning and without an end, which does not demand an expression, which *is*.

You must have asked yourself all these questions. But you always want to find an answer, you want to achieve that state; so you are putting a wrong question, and inevitably you will have a wrong answer. You *can't* achieve that state. Do what you will: go to all the monasteries, read all the books, attend all the talks, including these, seek out every teacher—you can never achieve that state of creation. It can come into being only when you have understood or felt out all the dark recesses of your own mind, so that the mind is completely still and not demanding anything. Don't you see what you are doing within yourself, and therefore outwardly too? You are seeking a state of mind in which you will be capable of understanding, in which you will have no problem; you want to be in a perpetual state of ecstasy, where you will know what love is, and all the rest of it. You are always asking. Your problems are known, and your answers are also known; therefore you

have created a picture, a symbol of what you should or should not be.

So, the mind has the power to remember, to discard, to know and to use that knowledge; it has the power to decide, to compare, to condemn, to evaluate. This mind is in constant operation; it is always judging, weighing, observing, interpreting; and I feel the crisis is *there*. If, being aware of this crisis, the mind puts its question within the field of the known, it will have an answer according to its own knowledge; therefore the problem continues. Whereas, can one confront the problem without a motive? Can one see for oneself—actually, not merely verbally—that the crisis is there, without knowing how to answer it? Do you understand? Because you really don't know how to answer it, do you? You have been through this or that religion, you have tried yoga or some other system of meditation, you have read the usual books, attended this talk, that talk, and have done all the things that every human being does in search of the answer; and you have not found it. Perhaps the problem itself has not been clear to you, because you have never felt the totality of consciousness; you have only known certain parts of it. But this evening you may have been able to feel the totality of this enormous thing.

You know, when you suddenly see something extraordinarily beautiful—a mountain, a stream in the shade of a tree, or the face of a child—your whole being becomes quiet, does it not? You don't say, "Why is it so beautiful?" Your mind, your whole being is, for a moment at least, completely still, because there is no answer. But that is merely an imposition. The beauty of something has momentarily knocked out your mind. It is like depending on a drug to make you quiet, taking L. S. D. so that you will have marvellous visions.

What we are talking about has no answer; so we have only the crisis, without the answer. But you have never faced the crisis in those terms. You

have never lived in that crisis without seeking an answer—because there is no answer. The fields of the known may be traversed in one swift perception, or it may take many years to cross the fields of the known. But when you have come to that point where you are really faced with the crisis which has no answer, and the mind is silent with a silence that is not imposed, then you will see, if you have the patience, that there is a revolution—a tremendous revolution in which the mind is made innocent through death of the known; and only such a mind can discover that which is everlasting.

*May 28, 1960*

## IV

### TALK IN OJAI

I am afraid this will have to be the last talk of the present series. I had intended to give another four talks, but unfortunately my physical condition will not allow me to go on. So this will be the last talk, and would you kindly tell your friends also that there will be no more talks here after today.

If I may, I would like this morning to talk about time, death, and meditation. I would like to go into these rather complex questions with you, but not just intellectually or verbally; because intellectually to grapple with these problems is of very little importance. It may amuse the intellect; but if we merely play with words, we are left with ashes. As most of us are intimately concerned with these problems, we should consider the fact and not be content with the word. The fact is much more important than the word. Time is an extraordinary fact, and it would be of great interest and significance if we could understand the whole process of time. All our life depends on time, and for the majority of us, death has tremendous significance. Either we are frightened of death, or we rationalize it, or we cling

to certain beliefs which give us hope and nullify our fears and despairs. Meditation is also very important. A mind that does not know what it is to meditate, has not lived at all; it is a dull, stupid, irrelevant mind.

So, I would like to discuss these things with you. I will do the verbalizing, if you will kindly give your attention to what is being said and follow it right through to the end. By attention I do not mean enforced concentration; because a mind that is forced to concentrate is not capable of understanding. But if the mind can flow with the ideas, without accepting or denying, without correcting or translating, then perhaps our thinking will transcend mere verbalization.

Most of us think from a conclusion, from the background of experience, from a remembered past. Our thinking arises as a reaction from the past. All our thinking is the response of memory. If we had no memory, there would be no thinking. One of the faculties of the mind is to remember and to coordinate as knowledge all the things it has experienced; and from that state of conditioning, from that background of experience as knowledge, the mind responds to any challenge, to any question, to any problem. This response is what we call thinking; and our thinking, as you will see if you observe it very carefully, is the very process of time. I will go into that presently.

Unless we understand the mechanical response of thinking, it seems to me that we shall not be able to grasp the significance of time. Our thinking is not merely the everyday reactions and responsibilities, the routine of work, and so on, but it is also the process of thinking abstractly, inwardly, comprehensively, the correlating of every form of experience, knowledge, in order to bring about a decision.

So, it is important to understand the mechanism of thinking, and to see its limitations. All thinking is limited thinking; there is no freedom in thinking.

Thinking is the process of a mind which has accumulated knowledge and responds from that background; therefore thinking can never be free, it is always limited. And if we respond to any human problem, however deep or superficial it may be, merely through the process of thinking, we shall not be able to resolve it, but on the contrary, we shall create more problems, more confusion, more misery. That is why it is absolutely essential to understand the mechanism of thinking.

When you are asked a familiar question, your response is immediate, is it not? If you are asked where you live, or what is your name, or what is your profession, your response is immediate, because you are very familiar with these things. But if you are asked a more serious or complicated question, there is a lag between the question and your response. In that time-interval your mind is furiously at work, looking into its accumulated memories to find the answer; and later on, as every schoolboy knows, the answer comes. If you are asked a much more complex question, involving a great deal of memory and the mechanism of inquiry, there is a still greater interval, a greater lag of time before the mind answers. And if a question is asked to which your mind, having searched the corridors of memory, can find no answer, then you say, "I don't know". But the "I don't know" is merely the state of a mind which is waiting, expecting, still trying to find an answer.

I hope you are following this, because the next statement is important to understand. You see these three steps, do you not? There is the mind's immediate response to a question; its response within a certain period or lag of time; and finally, having searched without finding an answer in the corridors of memory, it says, "I don't know". But when the mind says, "I don't know", it is waiting, expecting, looking for an answer. With most of us, that is the state of the mind. Having thought,

searched, inquired, we say, "I don't know". But in saying "I don't know", the mind is waiting, expecting. Now, there is a state in which the mind says, "I don't know", but it does not expect, is not waiting for an answer. There is no answer, there is no searching—it is in a state of complete not-knowing. Do you see the difference?

Sirs, may I say something? Please, don't take notes, for goodness' sake. This isn't a lecture. You and I are trying to discover, experience as we go along; we are trying to feel our way through. You are not capturing a phrase here and there to think over when you go home. You are doing it now—which means that you are really listening, and thereby actually experiencing what is being said. This is not a suggestion; you are not being influenced one way or the other. It is merely the statement of a fact. I am going to talk on the same subject in different ways from the beginning to the end; and if you are taking notes, or otherwise not giving your full attention, you are not going to be able to follow it right through. You have to give your whole, unenforced attention. The moment you force attention, you are blocking perception, because anything that is forced is unnatural, it is not spontaneous. So please, those of you who are serious, do give your full attention, and don't be distracted by taking down a few scattered words that have very little meaning.

As I was saying, thinking is the response of memory. The response may be immediate, or it may take time; and the mind may ultimately say, "I don't know". But when the mind says, "I don't know", it is waiting for an answer, either from its own deep-rooted experiences in the unconscious, or from a source beyond its own cognition. And there is the mind which has been through and recognizes this whole mechanical process of knowing and responding according to that knowledge, with the time-lag involved in it. When such a mind says, "I don't know", it is not waiting for an

answer or expecting a solution; it has wholly stopped searching, and therefore it is in a state of not-knowing.

So, all thinking is the response of memory, the response of experience as knowledge, whether that knowledge be of the individual, or of the collective. Knowledge or experience implies accumulation, and accumulation implies time: the thing that has been and the thing that will be, the before and the after, yesterday moving through today to tomorrow, time which is static, and time as movement. Time is static as the experience of many thousands of yesterdays; and though it moves through the present, fulfilling itself in tomorrow as the future, it is still static, only modified. That is, what has been, has been added to. It is an additive, accumulative process; and that which has accumulated, and is accumulating, is always within the field of time. From this accumulative centre we function mechanically. All electronic brains function as we do, only much faster, much more brilliantly, much more accurately; but it is essentially the same process as our thinking. So our thinking is mechanical; we function from conclusion to conclusion, from the known to the known, and always within the field of time—which is fairly obvious when you begin to examine it unemotionally, as you must; because anything that we examine emotionally, is distorted. This demands mere perception of the fact; whether you like or dislike the fact, is irrelevant. To perceive the fact as it is, requires a state of mind in which there is no emotion, no sentiment—and then there is perception which is of the highest intensity.

So, thinking, being mechanical, is not the way to a life which is not mechanical. Life is not mechanical, energy is not mechanical. But we want that energy to be mechanized, so that our minds may function happily, easily, comfortably within the field of time as convenience; therefore we reduce life, with all its extraordinary vastness and depth, to a

process of thinking, which is mechanical or intellectual; and then, not being able to find an answer to our problems, we become cynical, fearful, or we are in a state of despair. The more intellectual we are, the more despairing is our existence, and out of despair we invent philosophies; we say that we must accept life as it is and make the best of it, that we exist now and it is only the now that matters. Not being able to understand the totality of time, we try to cut away the past and the future, and live only in the present—which cannot be done, because there is no present. There is existence, but not an isolated present; and to create a philosophy out of this formula of the present, is so utterly immature, materialistic, limiting.

One begins to see that the mechanical process of thinking, which involves time, is not the answer; and yet all our days, our nights, our dreams—everything about us and within ourselves is based on thought. We never come to that state in which the mind, having been through all this, says, "I don't know". That is the state of innocency; it is a state in which the mind can discover something new, something which is not projected by its own desires, ambitions, fears, longings, despairs.

So, one perceives very clearly that thinking, however clever, however intelligent, however cunning, however philosophical, speculative or theological it may be, is still essentially mechanistic. Theologians the world over start from some conclusion—"Jesus is the Saviour", full stop—and from there build the whole structure of speculative philosophy. Similarly, the mind builds a vast intellectual superstructure based on the concept of existence as the now, or gets lost in speculative theories about the hereafter. And when we realize for ourselves the mechanistic nature of thinking, then arises the problem of how to put an end to it—how to die to the past. Do you understand the question?

I do not know if you have ever thought about death. You may have thought

about it; but have you actually faced death? Do you understand the difference? To think about death is one thing, and actually to confront death is another. If you *think* about death, invariably there arises fear with its sense of frustration in the coming to an end of things irrevocably, irremediably. But if you are confronted with death, there is no answer, there is no way out, there is no measure which will give you comfort, security: it is a fact. Death in the sense of total cessation, physically and psychologically, has to be faced. It is not to be denied, accepted, or rationalized: it is there. And it must be an extraordinary experience to die, as it must be an extraordinary experience to live totally. As we do not understand what it is to live totally, without conflict, without this everlasting inward contradiction, perhaps we shall never know what it is to experience the totality of death. The older we grow, the more fearful we are of death. Being afraid of death, we go to doctors, try new medicines, new drugs, and perhaps we may live twenty or thirty more years; but there it is, inevitably, round the corner. And to face that fact—to *face* it, not to think about it—requires a mind that is dead to the past, a mind that is actually in a state of not-knowing.

The future, after all, the tomorrow, is still within the field of time. And the mind is always thinking and functioning between yesterday and tomorrow, with today as a connecting passage. That is all it can do: prepare for the future through the present, depending on the past. We are caught between what has been and what will be, the before and the after, and we function mechanically in that field. And is it possible to die to that whole sense of time—actually to die, and not ask *how* to die? Death doesn't ask you if you are willing to die. You can't compromise with death, you can't ask it questions. Death is one of the most absolute things, a finality. You can't bargain with it. I know most of us would like to. We would like to

ask of it gifts, favours, the boon of escape; but death is indomitable, incorruptible.

So, can the mind die to its many yesterdays, to both the pleasant and the unpleasant memories of experience as knowledge? Can it die to the things it has gathered—die as it goes along? I do not know if you have ever experimented with that. To die to all your worries—not so that you can lead a more peaceful life, or do more business, or arrive fresh at your office, with a dead past, and thereby get a greater advantage over somebody else, or over a situation. I don't mean that kind of nonsense. To die without any future; to die without knowing what tomorrow is—after all, that is death. And that requires a mind which is very sharp, clear, capable of perceiving every thought, conscious or unconscious; a mind which is aware of every pleasure, and does not allow that pleasure to take root as memory. And is it possible so to die that there is no tomorrow?—which is not a state of despair. The moment you think in terms of hope and despair, you are again within the field of time, of fear. To go through that very strange experience of dying, not at the ultimate moment of physical death when one becomes unconscious, or one's mind is dull, made stupid by disease, or drug, or accident, but to die to the many yesterdays in full consciousness, with full vitality and awareness—surely that does create a mind which is in a state of not-knowing, and therefore in a state of meditation.

I would like to talk about this subject of meditation rather extensively, if there is time. Meditation is one of the most important things in life, as love is, as death and time are. But I do not think many of us know what it is to meditate. We know how to concentrate, as every schoolboy and schoolgirl does, how to focus our attention on something; and we also know that when something is vitally interesting, it absorbs the mind, as a child is absorbed with a new toy. The mind is then in a state of concentration, which is a state of complete

absorption and exclusion; but that is not the way of meditation.

Meditation is important because it opens the door to self-knowledge. But self-knowledge becomes very superficial and rather boring if it is merely information about yourself which you have gathered and held in your mind. You may say, "Well, I know myself, and there is nothing much to know". There isn't. One is greedy, ambitious, violent, sexual, and all the rest of it; so you say, "Yes, I know myself". But to go beyond that is the *knowing* of oneself, not the *knowledge* of oneself. I hope I am making it clear.

The knowing of oneself is entirely different from the process of acquiring knowledge *about* oneself, because knowing is a constant movement. There is no end to knowing, to learning, and therefore there is never a moment which is not extraordinary vital and unfolding. But if, having read a few books, and having watched yourself a little here and there, now and then, you say, "I know myself", that knowledge is merely additive, accumulative; and it is stifling, dead, it brings only darkness. Whereas, knowing is an indefinite movement.

So, meditation is the process of knowing oneself, and that is the door through which you will know the universe; because you are not just you, with a name and a bank account, or a profession. You are a result of the whole of man, whether he lives in Russia or America, in India or China. We are human beings, not labels; and within each human being is this total consciousness of humanity, of suffering, of thoughts, of ambitions—here as in India or China; circumstances vary, conditions differ, but people have the same misery, the same joy, the same platitudes, the same use of slogans, and the same happy moments.

To meditate is to inquire into the process of the mind without an object. The moment you have an object which you are seeking, your search is the result

of a cause, and that cause brings about the accumulation which you call knowledge; and therefore there is the darkness of knowledge.

I do not know if you have ever observed that there is a strength which has no cause. Most of our strength is the result of a cause, which is determination, the will to be or not to be something. This urge to be or not to be is in turn the result of one's various contradictory desires, ambitions, fulfilments, miseries. Every urge to be something has its roots in a cause, and it is that cause which projects, creates or develops a certain strength in the form of resistance, determination. When you remove the cause, the determination is gone; but another cause soon comes into being, and a different determination arises. Whereas, if the mind has examined and understood this whole process and therefore knows the meaning of meditation, then it will discover a strength that has no cause, a strength which is not of time.

So, meditation is essential—but not the so-called meditation of following a particular system. That is mere self-hypnosis; it is too immature, too silly altogether. Meditation is to be in a state of total awareness, so that the mind is emptying itself every moment of the day and therefore constantly discovering; because only that which is empty can receive. It is only the empty mind that has space to contemplate—not a mind that is making ceaseless effort to be or not to be, to arrive, to guard itself, to escape. Such a mind cannot be empty. It is only when the mind is empty of yesterday, of time, and is aware of that extraordinary thing called death—it is only then, being thus empty, that it can receive—not receive what you want. A mind that wants and seeks is not an empty mind. An empty mind is not just empty, it is not just blank; it is a very active mind. It has been through this whole process about which I have talked, and therefore it is vital, clear, without any sense of acceptance, denial,

expectation or rejection. And without this vital emptiness of the mind, our life is very drab. You may be very clever, you may be able to write books, paint pictures, or you may be a very skilful lawyer or politician; but without knowing what it is to meditate, life becomes extremely superficial, dull; and a dull mind is always seeking a way out of its dullness, and thereby creating further dullness for itself.

Seeing this chaotic state of things within and without, one has to purge oneself of the known, not verbally, intellectually, but actually; one has to die to everything. And when the mind is empty—which is really not a good word; but when the mind is empty, as the sky is empty, then that which is not measurable by man comes into being.

*May 29, 1960*